There's never been any question of giving it up I resent you aying it I resent it very much"

"But we haven't met a schedule for the last six months W haven't completed a run without some sort of breakdown, major o minor We're losing all our shippers, one after another How lon an we last?"

"You're a pessimist, Eddie You lack faith. That s what under mines the morale of an organization."

"You mean that nothing's going to be done about the Ri Norte Line?"

"I haven t said that at all Just as soon as we get the new track—

"Jim, there isn't going to be any new track" He watched Tag gart's eyelids move up slowly "I've just come back from the offic of Associated Steel I've spoken to Orren Boyle"

"What did he say?"

"He spoke for an hour and a half and did not give me a singl straight answer"

"What did you bother him for? I believe the first order of ra wasn t due for delivery until next month"

"And before that, it was due for delivery three months ago"

"Unforeseen circumstances Absolutely beyond Orren s control"

"And before that, it was due six months earlier Jim, we hav waited for Associated Steel to deliver that rail for thirteen months"

"What do you want me to do? I can t run Orren Boyle's business'

"I want you to understand that we can't wait"

Taggart asked slowly, his voice half mocking, half-cautious "What did my sister say?"

"She won't be back until tomorrow"

"Well, what do you want me to do?"

"That s for you to decide"

"Well, whatever else you say, there's one thing you're not goin to mention next—and that's Rearden Steel '

Eddie did not answer at once, then said quietly, 'All right, Jim I won't mention it"

'Orren is my friend" He heard no answer "I resent your att tude Orren Boyle will deliver that rail just as soon as it's humanl possible So long as he can't deliver it, nobody can blame us"

"Jim! What are you talking about? Don't you understand that th Rio Norte Line is breaking up—whether anybody blames us or not?

'People would put up with it—they'd have to—if it weren t fo the Phoenix Durango" He saw Eddie's face tighten "Nobody eve complained about the Rio Norte Line, until the Phoenix Durang came on the scene"

"The Phoenix Durango is doing a brilliant job"

"Imagine a thing called the Phoenix-Durango competing wit Taggart Transcontinental! It was nothing but a local milk line te years ago"

" [illegible] New Mexico an
n't lose Colo
[illegible]

things in eternal resentment of their existence. He looked and drained He was thirty nine years old.

He lifted his head with irritation, at the sound of door

"Don t bother me, don't bother me don t bother me" said Taggart

Eddie Willers walked toward the desk.

"It s important Jim " he said not raising his voice

"All right, all right, what is it?"

Eddie Willers looked at a map on the wall of the office map s colors had faded under the glass—he wondered dimly many Taggart presidents had sat before it and for how

The Taggart Transcontinental Railroad the network of rai slashing the faded body of the country from New York to Francisco, looked like a system of blood vessels. It looked once, long ago the blood had shot down the main artery and the pressure of its own overabundance, had branched out at ra points running all over the country One red streak twiste way from Cheyenne Wyoming down to El Paso T Norte Line of Taggart Transcontinental New tracing had added recently and the red streak had been extended south be El Paso—but Eddie Willers turned away hastily when his reached that point.

He looked at James Taggart and said It s the Rio Norte Li He noticed Taggart's glance moving down to a corner of the d "We ve had another wreck "

"Railroad accidents happen every day Did you have to bo me about that?"

"You know what I m saying Jim The Rio Norte is done That track is shot Down the whole line "

"We are getting a new track "

Eddie Willers continued as if there had been no answer "T track is shot It s no use trying to run trains down there Pe are giving up trying to use them "

"There is not a railroad in the country it seems to me t [illegible] deficit We re not the o national condition"

[illegible] t Taggart disliked ab [illegible] aight into people s ey [illegible] ing he had blond h [illegible] that look of scrupulo [illegible]

[illegible] had to know, becau

[illegible] somebody had to tell you'

"That we've had another accident?"

[illegible] the Rio Norte Line "

[illegible]

[illegible] thinking of giving up the Rio Nort [illegible]

isn't fair" said James Taggart
hat isn t?"
at we always give all our business to Rearden It seems to me ould give somebody else a chance too Rearden doesn t need 's plenty big enough We ought to help the smaller fellows to op Otherwise we re just encouraging a monopoly"
on t talk tripe Jim"
hy do we always have to get things from Rearden?"
cause we always get them
don't like Henry Rearden"
do But what does that matter one way or the other? We need and he s the only one who can give them to us
he human element is very important You have no sense of uman element at all."
e're talking about saving a railroad Jim"
es of course of course but still you haven t any sense of the n element"
o I haven t"
we give Rearden such a large order for steel rails—"
hey re not going to be steel They're Rearden Metal
e had always avoided personal reactions but she was forced eak her rule when she saw the expression on Taggart s face burst out laughing
arden Metal was a new alloy produced by Rearden after ten of experiments He had placed it on the market recently He received no orders and had found no customers
ggart could not understand the transition from the laughter e sudden tone of Dagny s voice, the voice was cold and harsh p it Jim I know everything you re going to say Nobody s used it before Nobody approves of Rearden Metal Nobody s rested in it. Nobody wants it Still our rails are going to be e of Rearden Metal
ut " said Taggart, "but but nobody's ever used it e"
e observed with satisfaction that she was silenced by anger iked to observe emotions they were like red lanterns strung g the dark unknown of another s personality marking vulner points But how one could feel a personal emotion about a l alloy and what such an emotion indicated was incompre c'e to him so he could make no use of his d scovery
he consensus of the best metallurgical authorit es" he said ns to be highly skeptical about Rearden Metal contending—"
Drop it, Jim"
Well whose opinion d d you take?"
don t ask for opinions"
What do you go by?"
udgment.
you take?"
It about it?"

"Then what on earth do you know about Rearden

"That it's the greatest thing ever put on the market."

'Why?"

"Because it's tougher than steel, cheaper than steel outlast any hunk of metal in existence "

"But who says so?'

"Jim, I studied engineering in college When I see thi them "

"What did you see?"

"Rearden's formula and the tests he showed me "

'Well, if it were any good somebody would have us nobody has " He saw the flash of anger, and went on i "How can you *know* it s good? How can you be sure? you decide?"

"Somebody decides such things, Jim Who?"

"Well, I don't see why we have to be the first ones I it at all "

'Do you want to save the Rio Norte Line or not?" H answer. "If the road could afford it, I would scrap every rail over the whole system and replace it with Rearden M of it needs replacing None of it will last much longer But afford it We have to get out of a bad hole, first Do you to pull through or not?

"We re still the best railroad in the country The others worse "

"Then do you want us to remain in the hole?"

"I haven't said that! Why do you always oversimpli that way? And if you re worried about money, I don't see want to waste it on the Rio Norte Line, when the Durango has robbed us of all our business down there W money when we have no protection against a competitor w stroy our investment?"

"Because the Phoenix Durango is an excellent railroa intend to make the Rio Norte Line better than that Bec going to beat the Ph

[illegible]

He did not like the way her eyes moved to look at remained still, looking for a moment

"I don't see any need for immediate action," he said, he offended "Just what do you consider so alarming in the situation of Taggart Transcontinental?'

"The consequences of your policies, Jim."

"Which policies?"

"That thirteen months' experiment with Associated St one Your Mexican catastrophe, for another "

"The Board approved the Associated Steel contract," hastily "The Board voted to build the San Sebastián Line I don t see why you call it a catastrophe "

use the Mexican government is going to nationalize your
y day now."
t's a lie!" His voice was almost a scream. "That's nothing
ous rumors! I have it on very good inside authority that—"
't show that you're scared, Jim," she said contemptuously.
Ld not answer
no use getting panicky about it now," she said "All we can
ry to cushion the blow It's going to be a bad blow Forty
dollars is a loss from which we won't recover easily. But
t Transcontinental has withstood many bad shocks in the
'll see to it that it withstands this one."
refuse to consider, I absolutely refuse to consider the pos-
y of the San Sebastián Line being nationalized!"
l right. Don't consider it."
remained silent. He said defensively, "I don't see why you're
ger to give a chance to Ellis Wyatt, yet you think it's wrong
e part in developing an underprivileged country that never
chance."
Ls Wyatt is not asking anybody to give him a chance. And
ot in business to give chances I'm running a railroad"
hat's an extremely narrow view, it seems to me. I don't see
e should want to help one man instead of a whole nation."
n not interested in helping anybody I want to make money"
hat's an impractical attitude Selfish greed for profit is a thing
e past It has been generally conceded that the interests of
y as a whole must always be placed first in any business
rtaking which—"
How long do you intend to talk in order to evade the issue,
?"
What issue?"
The order for Rearden Metal."

eautiful legs, slanting down from the chair's arm in the center
s vision, annoyed him, they spoiled the rest of his estimate
e remained silent he was forced to ask, "Did you decide to
it just like that, on the spur of the moment, over a tele-
e?"
decided it six months ago I was waiting for Hank Rearden to
ready to go into production."
Don't call him *Hank* Rearden. It's vulgar"
That's what everybody calls him Don't change the subject."
Why did you have to telephone him last night?"
Couldn't reach him sooner"
Why didn't you wait until you got back to New York and—"
Because I had seen the Rio Norte Line."
Well, I need time to consider it, to place the matter before the
rd, to consult the best—"

'There is no time
"You haven t given me a chance to form an opinion"
"I don't give a damn about your opinion I am not going argue with you with your Board or with your professors You ha a choice to make and you're going to make it now Just a yes or no
"That s a preposterous high handed arbitrary way of—"
Yes or no?"
'That s the trouble with you You always make it Yes or N Things are never absolute like that Nothing is absolute"
"Metal rails are Whether we get them or not, is
She waited He did not answer
Well? she asked
Are you taking the responsibility for it?
"I am"
Go ahead" he said and added but at your own risk I cancel it but I won t commit myself as to what I ll say to Board"
Say anything you wish
She rose to go He leaned forward across the desk reluc end the interview and to end it so decisively
"You realize of course that a lengthy procedure will be to put this through he said the words sounded almost i "It isn t as simple as that
Oh sure" she said I ll send you a detailed report which will prepare and which you won t read Eddie will help it through the works I m going to Philadelphia tonight Rearden He and I have a lot of work to do" She added as simple as that Jim"
She had turned to go when he spoke again—and what he seemed bewilderingly irrelevant 'That s all right for you, b you re lucky Others can t do it.
"Do what?"
Other people are human They re sensitive They can t their whole life to metals and engines You re lucky—you've had any feelings You've never felt anything at all"
As she looked at him her dark gray eyes went slowly astonishment to stillness then to a strange expression that a look of weariness except that it seemed to reflect much more the endurance of this one moment.
"No Jim" she said quietly "I guess I've never felt anything
Eddie Willers followed her to her office Whenever turned he felt as if the world became clear simple easy to —and he forgot his moments of shapeless apprehension He the only person who found it completely natural that she be the Operating Vice President of a great railroad even she was a woman She had told him when he was ten years that she would run the railroad some day It did not as him now just as it had not astonished him that day in a of the woods
When they entered her office when he saw her sit down a

and glance at the memos he had left for her—he felt as he
n his car when the motor caught on and the wheels could
forward

n he remembered a matter
he Terminal Division has
" he said
any I was going to send
see him Eddie" she
n to get me Ayers of the
phone"
repeated incredulously
k him"
eously eager, inquired of
service he could be to her, she asked, 'Can you tell me
her Richard Halley has written a new piano concerto, the
?"

fifth concerto, Miss Taggart? Why, no, of course he hasn't"
re you sure?"
uite sure, Miss Taggart He has not written anything for eight
"

he still alive?"
Why, yes—that is, I can't say for certain he has dropped out
ublic life entirely—but I'm sure we would have heard of it if
ad died"
he wrote anything, would you know about it?
f course We would be the first to know We publish all of his
But he has stopped writing"
see Thank you"
hen Owen Kellogg entered her office, she looked at him with
action She was glad to see that she had been right in her
recollection of his appearance—his face had the same
ty as that of the young brakeman on the train, the face of the
of man with whom she could deal
t down, Mr Kellogg,' she said, but he remained standing in
of her desk.
ou had asked me once to let you know if I ever decided to
ge my employment, Miss Taggart," he said "So I came to
ou that I am quitting"
had expected anything but that, it took her a moment
e she asked quietly, "Why?"
or a personal reason"
Were you dissatisfied here?'
o"
ave you received a better offer?"
o"
What railroad are you going to?"
m not going to any railroad, Miss Taggart."
hen what job are you taking?"
have not decided that yet.'
e studied him, feeling slightly uneasy There was no hos
face, he looked straight at her, he answered simply,

he spoke like one who has nothing to hide, or to show, the was polite and empty

"Then why should you wish to quit?"

"It s a personal matter"

'Are you ill? Is it a question of your health?"

"No"

"Are you leaving the city?"

"No'

"Have you inherited money that permits you to retire?"

'No"

"Do you intend to continue working for a living?"

'Yes"

"But you do not wish to work for Taggart Transcontinental?"

"No"

'*In that case something must have happened here to cause* decision What?

"Nothing Miss Taggart"

"I wish you d tell me I have a reason for wanting to know"

'Would you take my word for it, Miss Taggart?"

"Yes"

"No person matter or event connected with my job here any bearing upon my decision"

You have no specific complaint against Taggart Transtinental?

"None"

"Then I think you might reconsider when you hear what I offer you

I m sorry Miss Taggart I can't"

May I tell you what I have in mind?'

Yes if you wish"

'Would you take my word for it that I decided to offer the post I m going to offer before you asked to see me? I want to know that '

"I will always take your word Miss Taggart"

It s the post of Superintendent of the Ohio Division It s y if you want it"

ticket, Kellogg Name your price I want you to stay I can m anything any other railroad offers you."

"*I am not going to work for any other railroad.*"

"I thought you loved your work"

This was the first sign of emotion in him, just a slight wide of his eyes and an oddly quiet emphasis in his voice when answered "I do"

"Perhaps I am being unfair by coming here to tell you the

ting, Miss Taggart. I know that you asked me to tell you because you wanted to have a chance to make me a counter-offer So if I came, it looks as if I'm open to a deal But I'm not I came only because I . . I wanted to keep my word to you'

That one break in his voice was like a sudden flash that told her how much her interest and her request had meant to him, and that his decision had not been an easy one to make

"Kellogg, is there nothing I can offer you?" she asked.

"Nothing, Miss Taggart Nothing on earth"

He turned to go For the first time in her life, she felt helpless and beaten

"Why?' she asked, not addressing him.

He stopped He shrugged and smiled—he was alive for a moment and it was the strangest smile she had ever seen it held secret amusement, and heartbreak, and an infinite bitterness He answered

"*Who is John Galt?*"

Chapter II THE CHAIN

It began with a few lights As a train of the Taggart line rolled toward Philadelphia, a few brilliant, scattered lights appeared in the darkness, they seemed purposeless in the empty plain, yet too powerful to have no purpose The passengers watched them idly, without interest.

The black shape of a structure came next barely visible against the sky, then a big building close to the tracks the building was dark, and the reflections of the train lights streaked across the solid glass of its walls

An oncoming freight train hid the view filling the windows with a rushing smear of noise In a sudden break above the flat cars the passengers saw distant structures under a faint reddish glow in the sky, the glow moved in irregular spasms as if the structures were breathing

When the freight train vanished, they saw angular buildings wrapped in coils of steam The rays of a few strong lights cut straight sheafs through the coils The steam was red as the sky

The thing that came next did not look like a building, but like a shell of checkered glass enclosing girders, cranes and trusses in a solid, blinding, orange spread of flame.

The passengers could not grasp the complexity of what seemed to be a city stretched for miles, active without sign of human presence They saw towers that looked like contorted skyscrapers, bridges hanging in mid air, and sudden wounds spurting fire from out of solid walls They saw a line of glowing cylinders moving through the night the cylinders were red hot metal

An office building appeared, close to the tracks The big neon sign on its roof lighted the interiors of the coaches as they by It said REARDEN STEEL.

A passenger, who was a professor of economics, remar companion 'Of what importance is an individual in

collective achievements of our industrial age?" Another, who was a journalist, made a note for future use in his column "Hank Rearden is the kind of man who sticks his name on everything he touches You may, from this, form your own opinion about the character of Hank Rearden"

The train was speeding on into the darkness when a red gasp shot to the sky from behind a long structure The passengers paid no attention, one more heat of steel being poured was not an event they had been taught to notice

It was the first heat for the first order of Rearden Metal

To the men at the tap hole of the furnace inside the mills, the first break of the liquid metal into the open came as a shocking sensation of morning The narrow streak pouring through space had the pure white color of sunlight Black coils of steam were boiling upward, streaked with violent red Fountains of sparks shot in beating spasms, as from broken arteries The air seemed torn to rags reflecting a raging flame that was not there, red blotches whirling and running through space, as if not to be contained within a man made structure, as if about to consume the *columns, the girders* the *bridges* of cranes overhead But the quid metal had no aspect of violence It was a long white curve the texture of satin and the friendly radiance of a smile It ed, obediently through a spout of clay, with two brittle borders strain it it fell through twenty feet of space down into a rc that held two hundred tons A flow of stars hung above the stream, leaping out of its placid smoothness, looking delicate as lace and innocent as children s sparklers Only at a closer glance could one notice that the white satin was boiling Splashes flew out at times and fell to the ground below they were metal and, cooling while hitting the soil, they burst into flame

Two hundred tons of metal which was to be harder than steel, running liquid at a temperature of four thousand degrees, had the power to annihilate every wall of the structure and every one of the men who worked by the stream But every inch of its course, every pound of its pressure and the content of every molecule within it, were controlled and made by a conscious intention that had worked upon it for ten years

Swinging through the darkness of the shed, the red glare kept slashing the face of a man who stood in a distant corner; he stood leaning against a column watching The glare cut a moment's wedge across his eyes, which had the color and quality of pale blue ice—then across the black web of the metal column and the ash blond strands of his hair—then across the belt of his trench coat and the pockets where he held his hands His body was tall and gaunt, he had always been too tall for those around him His face was cut by prominent cheekbones and by a few sharp lines they were not the lines of age he had always had them this had made him look old at twenty, and young now, at forty five Ever since he could remember, he had been told that his face was ugly, because it was unyielding, and cruel, because it was expressionless I'

remained expressionless now, as he looked at the metal He was Hank Rearden

The metal came rising to the top of the ladle and went running over with arrogant prodigality Then the blinding white trickles turned to glowing brown, and in one more instant they were black icicles of metal, starting to crumble off The slag was crusting in thick, brown ridges that looked like the crust of the earth As the crust grew thicker, a few craters broke open with the white liquid still boiling within

A man came riding through the air, in the cab of a crane over head He pulled a lever by the casual movement of one hand steel hooks came down on a chain, seized the handles of the ladle, lifted it smoothly like a bucket of milk—and two hundred tons of metal went sailing through space toward a row of molds waiting to be filled.

Hank Rearden leaned back, closing his eyes He felt the column trembling with the rumble of the crane The job was done he thought.

A worker saw him and grinned in understanding like a fellow accomplice in a great celebration, who knew why that tall blond figure had had to be present here tonight Rearden smiled in answer it was the only salute he had received Then he started back for his office, once again a figure with an expressionless face

It was late when Hank Rearden left his office that night to walk from his mills to his house It was a walk of some miles through empty country, but he had felt like doing it, without conscious reason.

He walked, keeping one hand in his pocket, his fingers closed about a bracelet It was made of Rearden Metal, in the shape of a chain His fingers moved, feeling its texture once in a while It had taken ten years to make that bracelet Ten years he thought is a long time

The road was dark, edged with trees Looking up he could see a few leaves against the stars the leaves were twisted and dry, ready to fall There were distant lights in the windows of houses scattered through the countryside, but the lights made the road seem lonelier

He never felt loneliness except when he was happy He turned, once in a while, to look back at the red glow of the sky over the mills

He did not think of the ten years What remained of them tonight was only a feeling which he could not name, except that it was quiet and solemn. The feeling was a sum and he did not have to count again the parts that had gone to make it But the parts, unrecalled, were there, within the feeling They were the ni[illegible] spent at scorching ovens in the research laboratory of the

—the nights spent in the workshop of his home, over paper which he filled with formulas then tore up in angry [illegible]

—the days when the young scientists of the small staff chosen to assist him waited for instructions like soldiers a hopeless ba[illegible] exhausted their ingenuity,

but silent with the unspoken sentence hanging in the air "Mr Rearden it cant be done—'

—the meals interrupted and abandoned at the sudden flash of a new thought a thought to be pursued at once to be tried to be tested to be worked on for months, and to be discarded as another failure—

—the moments snatched from conferences, from contracts from the duties of running the best steel mills in the country, snatched almost guiltily as for a secret love—

—the one thought held immovably across a span of ten years, under everything he did and everything he saw, the thought held in his mind when he looked at the buildings of a city, at the track of a railroad at the light in the windows of a distant farmhouse, at the knife in the hands of a beautiful woman cutting a piece of fruit at a banquet the thought of a metal alloy that would do more than steel had ever done a metal that would be to steel what steel had been to iron—

—the acts of self racking when he discarded a hope or a sample, not permitting himself to know that he was tired not giving himself time to feel, driving himself through the wringing torture of "not good enough still not good enough and going on with no motor save the conviction that it could be done—

—then the day when it was done and its result was called Rearden Metal—

—these were the things that had come to white heat, had melted and fused within him, and *their* alloy was a strange, quiet feeling ... wonder

... ist, as if ... be seen again He did not want to look at them, he despised memories as a pointless indulgence But then he understood that he thought of them tonight in honor of that piece of metal in his pocket Then he permitted himself to look

He saw the day when he stood on a rocky ledge and felt a thread of sweat running from his temple down his neck He was fourteen ...

thirty years old. What had gone on ... matter, just as pain had not mattered He had worked in mines, in foundries in the steel mills of the north moving toward the purpose he had chosen All he remembered of those jobs was that the men around him had never seemed to know what to do while he had always known He remembered wondering why so many iron mines were closing, just as these had been about to close until he took them over He looked at the shelves of rock in the

distance Workers were putting up a new sign above a gate at the end of a road Rearden Ore

He saw an evening when he sat slumped across his desk in that office It was late and his staff had left, so he could lie there alone, unwitnessed. He was tired It was as if he had run a race against his own body, and all the exhaustion of years, which he had refused to acknowledge, had caught him at once and flattened him against the desk top He felt nothing, except the desire not to move He did not have the strength to feel—not even to suffer He had burned everything there was to burn within him, he had scattered so many sparks to start so many things—and he wondered whether someone could give him now the spark he needed, now when he felt unable ever to rise again He asked himself who had started him and kept him going Then he raised his head. Slowly, with the greatest effort of his life, he made his body rise until he was able to sit upright with only one hand pressed to the desk and a trembling arm to support him He never asked that question again

He saw the day when he stood on a hill and looked at a grimy wasteland of structures that had been a steel plant It was closed and given up He had bought it the night before There was a strong wind and a gray light squeezed from among the clouds In that light, he saw the brown red of rust, like dead blood on the steel of the giant cranes—and bright, green, living weeds like gorged cannibals, growing over piles of broken glass at the foot of walls made of empty frames At a gate in the distance, he saw the black silhouettes of men They were the unemployed from the rotting hovels of what had once been a prosperous town They stood silently [illegible] d left at the gate of the [illegible] the hill was the Hank [illegible] and whether it was true [illegible] historical cycle of steel- [illegible] ing down a newspaper had said, and experts agree that Henry Rearden's venture into steel is hopeless You may soon witness the sensational end of the sensational Henry Rearden"

That was ten years ago Tonight, the cold wind on his face felt like the wind of that day He turned to look back The red glow of the mills breathed in the sky, a sight as life giving as a sunrise.

These had been his stops, the stations which an express had reached and passed He remembered nothing distinct of the years between them, the years were blurred, like a streak of speed.

Whatever it was, he thought, whatever the strain and the agony, they were worth it, because they had made him reach th[illegible] this day when the first heat of the first order of Rearde[illegible] had been poured, to become rails for Taggart Tran[illegible]

He touched the bracelet in his pocket. He had had it [illegible] that first poured metal It was for his wife

As he touched it, he realized suddenly that he had [illegible] abstraction called "his wife"—not of the woman to [illegible] married He felt [illegible] stab of regret, wishing he [illegible] bracelet, then [illegible]

He shook his head This was not the time for his old doubts He felt that he could forgive anything to anyone, because happiness was the greatest agent of purification He felt certain that every living being wished him well tonight He wanted to meet someone, to face the first stranger, to stand disarmed and open, and to say, "Look at me" People he thought, were as hungry for a sight of joy as he had always been—for a moment s relief from that gray load of suffering which seemed so inexplicable and unnecessary He had never been able to understand why men should be un happy

The dark road had risen imperceptibly to the top of a hill He stopped and turned The red glow was a narrow strip, far to the west Above it small at a distance of miles, the words of a neon sign stood written on the blackness of the sky REARDEN STEEL.

He stood straight [illegible] He thought that in the darkness [illegible] the country Rearden [illegible] He thought of the day [illegible] e to light a neon sign above them saying Rearden Life

He turned sharply and walked on As the road came closer to his house, he noticed that his steps were slowing down and that something was ebbing away from his mood He felt a dim reluctance to enter his home which he did not want to feel No he thought, not tonight they'll understand it, tonight But he did not know, he had never defined, what it was that he wanted them to under stand.

He saw lights in the windows of the living room when he ap proached his house The house stood on a hill rising before him like a big white bulk it looked naked, with a few semi-colonial pillars for reluctant ornament, it had the cheerless look of a nudity not worth revealing

He was not certain whether his wife noticed him when he entered the living room She sat by the fireplace, talking the curve of her arm floating in graceful emphasis of her words He heard a small break in her voice and thought that she had seen him but she did not look up and her sentence went on smoothly; he could not be certain

"—but it s just that a man of culture is bored with the alleged wonders of purely material ingenuity," she was saying 'He simply refuses to get excited about plumbing"

Then she turned her head, looked at Rearden in the shadows across the long room and her arms spread gracefully, like two swan necks by her sides

"Why, darling" she said in a bright tone of amusement, "isn t it too early to come home? Wasn t there some slag to sweep or tuyères to polish?"

They all turned to him—his mother, his brother Philip and Paul Larkin, their old friend

"I'm sorry" he answered "I know I m late"

"Don't say you re sorry" said his mother You could have tel phoned" He looked at her, trying vaguely to remember somethi[illegible]

"You promised to be here for dinner tonight."

"Oh, that's right, I did I m sorry But today at the mills, we poured—" He stopped, he did not know what made him unable to utter the one thing he had come home to say, he added only, "It s *just that I . forgot.*"

"That's what Mother means," said Philip

"Oh ... yet he's still at

... off Henry"

... oted eyes of an

... did you get in?"

"Oh, I just hopped down on the five thirty five from New York." Larkin was smiling in gratitude for the attention

"Trouble?"

"Who hasn't got trouble these days?' Larkin s smile became esigned, to indicate that the remark was merely philosophical 'But no, no special trouble this time I just thought I d drop in to ee you."

His wife laughed *"You've disappointed him Paul" She turned to* Rearden. 'Is it an inferiority complex or a superiority one Henry? Do you believe that nobody can want to see you just for your own sake, or do you believe that nobody can get along without your help?"

He wanted to utter an angry denial, but she was smiling at him as if this were merely a conversational joke and he had no capacity for the sort of conversations which were not supposed to be meant, so he did not answer He stood looking at her wondering about the things he had never been able to understand.

Lillian Rearden was generally regarded as a beautiful woman She had a tall, graceful body, the kind that looked well in high waisted gowns of the Empire style, which she made it a practice to wear Her *exquisite profile belonged to a cameo of the same* period its pure, proud lines and the lustrous, light brown waves of her hair, worn with classical simplicity, suggested an austere, imperial beauty But when she turned full face people experienced a small shock of disappointment. Her face was not beautiful The eyes were the flaw they were vaguely pale, neither quite gray nor brown, lifelessly empty of expression. Rearden had always won dered, since she seemed amused so often, why there was no gaiety in her face.

"We have met before, dear," she said, in answer to his silent scrutiny, "though you don't seem to be sure of it"

"Have you had any dinner, Henry?" his mother asked there was a reproachful impatience in her voice, as if his hunger were a personal insult to her

"Yes . No . . I wasn't hungry"

"I d better ring to have them—"

"No, Mother, not now, it doesn t matter"

"That s the trouble I ve always had with you" She was not looking at him, but reciting words into space "It s no use trying to do things for you, you don't appreciate it. I could never make you eat properly"

Henry you work too hard said Philip "It s not good for you."
Rearden laughed I like it "

"That s what you tell yourself It s a form of neurosis you know When a man drowns himself in work its because he s trying to escape from something You ought to have a hobby"

"Oh Phil for Christ s sake! he said and regretted the irritation in his voice

Philip had always been in precarious health though doctors had

"You ought to learn to have some fun" said Philip Otherwise, you ll become dull and narrow Single tracked you know You ought to get out of your little private shell and take a look at the world You don t want to miss life the way you re doing

Fighting anger Rearden told himself that this was Philip s form of solicitude He told himself that it would be unjust to feel resentment they were all trying to show their concern for him— and he wished these were not the things they had chosen for concern

I had a pretty good time today Phil" he answered smiling— and wondered why Philip did not ask him what it was

He wished one of them would ask him He was finding it hard to concentrate The sight of the running metal was still burned into his mind filling his consciousness leaving no room for anything else

"You might have apologized only I ought to know better than to expect it" It was his mother s voice he turned she was looking at him with that injured look which proclaims the long bearing patience of the defenseless

"Mrs Beacham was here for dinner" she said reproachfully

"What?

"Mrs Beacham My friend Mrs Beacham

"Yes?

"I told you about her I told you many times but *you never* remember anything I say Mrs Beacham was so anxious to meet you but she had to leave after dinner she couldn t wait Mrs Beacham is a very busy person She wanted so much to tell you about the wonderful work *we re* doing in our parish school and about the classes in metal craftsmanship and about the beautiful wrought iron doorknobs that the little slum children are making all by themselves

It took the whole of his sense of consideration to force himself to answer evenly I m sorry if I disappointed you Mother

"You re not sorry You could ve been here if you d made the effort But when did *you* ever make an effort for anybody but yourself? You re not interested in any of us or in *anything we do* You think if you pay the bills that s enough don t you? Money! That s all you know And all you give us is money Have you ever given us any time?

If this meant that she missed him he thought then it

affection, and if it meant affection, then he was unjust to experience a heavy, murky feeling which kept him silent lest his voice betray that the feeling was disgust

"You don't care," her voice went half-spitting, half begging on 'Lillian needed you today for a very important problem, but I told her it was no use waiting to discuss it with you"

"Oh, Mother, it's not important!" said Lillian "Not to Henry"

He turned to her He stood in the middle of the room, with his trenchcoat still on, as if he were trapped in an unreality that would not become real to him

"It's not important at all," said Lillian gaily, he could not tell whether her voice was apologetic or boastful "It's not business It's purely non-commercial"

"What is it?"

"Just a party I'm planning to give"

"A party?"

"Oh, don't look frightened, it's not for tomorrow night. I know that you're so very busy, but it's for three months from now and I want it to be a very big, very special affair, so would you promise me to be here that night and not in Minnesota or Colorado or California?"

She was looking at him in an odd manner, speaking too lightly and too purposefully at once, her smile overstressing an air of innocence and suggesting something like a hidden trump card

"Three months from now?" he said 'But you know that I can't tell what urgent business might come up to call me out of town'

"Oh, I know! But couldn't I make a formal appointment with you, way in advance, just like any railroad executive, automobile manufacturer or junk—I mean, scrap—dealer? They say you never miss an appointment Of course, I'd let you pick the date to suit your convenience." She was looking up at him, her glance acquir

"It makes no difference to me"

She said gently, "December tenth is our wedding anniversary, Henry"

They were all watching his face, if they expected a look of guilt, what they saw, instead, was a faint smile of amusement She could not have intended this as a trap, he thought, because he could escape it so easily, by refusing to accept any blame for his forgetfulness and by leaving her spurned, she knew that his feeling for her was her only weapon Her motive, he thought, was a proudly indirect attempt to test his feeling and to confess her own A party was not his form of celebration, but it was hers It meant in his terms, in hers it meant the best tribute she could offer and to their marriage He had to respect her intention, he th even if he did not share her standards, even if he did whether he still cared for any tribute from her He had win, he thought, because she had thrown herself upon

He smiled, an open, unresentful smile in acknowledgment of her victory "All right, Lillian," he said quietly, "I promise to be here on the night of December tenth"

"Thank you, dear" Her smile had a closed, mysterious quality; he wondered why he had a moment's impression that his attitude had disappointed them all

If she trusted him, he thought, if her feeling for him was still alive, then he would match her trust He had to say it, words were a lens to focus one's mind, and he could not use words for anything else tonight I'm sorry I'm late, Lillian, but today at the mills we poured the first heat of Rearden Metal"

There was a moment of silence. Then Philip said, "Well, that's nice"

The others said nothing

He put his hand in his pocket When he touched it, the reality of the bracelet swept out everything else, he felt as he had felt when the liquid metal had poured through space before him

"I brought you a present, Lillian"

He did not know that he stood straight and that the gesture of his arm was that of a returning crusader offering his trophy to his love, when he dropped a small chain of metal into her lap

Lillian Rearden picked it up, hooked on the tips of two straight fingers, and raised it to the light. The links were heavy, crudely made, the shining metal had an odd tinge, it was greenish blue

'What's that?' she asked

"The first thing made from the first heat of the first order of Rearden Metal"

"You mean," she said, "it's fully as valuable as a piece of railroad rails?"

He looked at her blankly.

She jingled the bracelet, making it sparkle under the light "Henry, it's perfectly wonderful! What originality! I shall be the sensation of New York, wearing jewelry made of the same stuff as bridge girders, truck motors, kitchen stoves, typewriters, and—what was it you were saying about it the other day, darling?—soup kettles?"

"God, Henry, but you're conceited!" said Philip

Lillian laughed "He's a sentimentalist All men are But, darling, I [illegible]

[illegible]

"No, it's sweet," said Lillian. "It's charming" She dropped the bracelet down on the table She got up, put her hands on Rearden's [illegible], and raising herself on tiptoe, kissed him on the cheek, [illegible] "Thank you, dear."

He did not move, did not bend his head down to her.

After a while, he turned, took off his coat and sat down by the fire, apart from the others He felt nothing but an immense exhaustion

He did not listen to their talk. He heard dimly that Lillian was arguing, defending him against his mother

"I know him better than you do," his mother was saying 'Hank Rearden's not interested in man, beast or weed unless it's tied in some way to himself and his work That's all he cares about I've tried my best to teach him some humility, I've tried all my life, but I've failed"

He had offered his mother unlimited means to live as and where she pleased, he wondered why she had insisted that she wanted to live with him His success, he had thought, meant something to her, and if it did, then it was a bond between them, the only kind of bond he recognized, if she wanted a place in the home of her successful son, he would not deny it to her

"It's no use hoping to make a saint out of Henry, Mother," said Philip "He wasn't meant to be one"

"Oh but, Philip, you're wrong!" said Lillian "You're so wrong! Henry has all the makings of a saint That's the trouble"

What did they seek from him?—thought Rearden—what were they after? He had never asked anything of them, it was they who wished to hold him, they who pressed a claim on him—and the claim seemed to have the form of affection, but it was a form which he found harder to endure than any sort of hatred He despised causeless affection, just as he despised unearned wealth They professed to love him for some unknown reason and they ignored all the things for which he could wish to be loved He wondered what response they could hope to obtain from him in such manner —if his response was what they wanted And it was, he thought, else why those constant complaints, those unceasing accusations about his indifference? Why that chronic air of suspicion, as if they were waiting to be hurt? He had never had a desire to hurt them, but he had always felt their defensive, reproachful expectation they seemed wounded by anything he said, it was not a matter of his words or actions, it was almost . almost as if they were wounded by the mere fact of his being Don't start imagining the insane—he told himself severely, struggling to face the riddle with the strictest of his ruthless sense of justice He could not condemn them without understanding, and he could not understand

Did he like them? No, he thought, he had wanted to like them, which was not the same He had wanted it in the name of some unstated potentiality which he had once expected to see in any human being He felt nothing for them now, nothing but the merciless zero of indifference, not even the regret of a loss Did he need any person as part of his life? Did he miss the feeling he had to feel? No, he thought. Had he ever missed it? Yes, he in his youth, not any longer.

His sense of exhausti growing, he realized that boredom He owed of hiding it, he

and sat motionless fighting a desire for sleep that was turning into physical pain

His eyes were closing when he felt two soft moist fingers touching his hand Paul Larkin had pulled a chair to his side and was leaning over for a private conversation

"I don t care what the industry says about it, Hank you ve got a great product in Rearden Metal a great product it will make a fortune l'ke everything you touch"

Yes" said Rearden "it will"

"I just I just hope you dont run into trouble"

What trouble?

Oh I dont know the way things are nowadays there s people who but how can we tell? anything can happen "

"What trouble?

Larkin sat hunched looking up with his gentle pleading eyes His short plumpish figure always seemed unprotected and incomplete as if he needed a shell to shrink into at the slightest touch His wistful eyes his lost helpless appealing smile served as substitute for the shell The smile was disarming like that of a boy who throws himself at the mercy of an incomprehensible universe He was fifty three years old

Your publ c relat ons aren t any too good Hank" he said "You've always had a bad press"

"So what?"

"You re not popular Hank."

"I haven t heard any complaints from my customers

"That s not what I mean You ought to hire yourself a good press agent to sell *you* to the public

What for? It s steel that I m selling

"But you don t want to have the publ c against you Public op nion you know—it can mean a lot"

"I don t th nk the public s against me And I don t think that it means a damn one way or another"

"The newspapers are against you

"They have time to waste I haven t"

"I don t like it Hank It s not good."

"What?

"What they write about you"

"What do they write about me?"

"Well you know the s uff That you re intractable That you re ruthless That you won t allow anyone any vo ce in the running of your m lls That your only goal is to make steel and to make money"

"But that *is* my only goal"

"But you shouldn t say it"

"Why not? What is it I m supposed to say?"

"Oh I don t know But your mills—"

"They re *my* m lls aren t they?"

es but—but you shouldn't remind people of that too loudly.

. . You know how it is nowadays . . . They think that your titude is anti-social"

"I don't [illegible] damn what they th[illegible]"

[illegible] driving at?"

[illegible] one never knows what n happen in times like these . One has to be so careful ."

Rearden chuckled "You're not trying to worry about me, are ou?"

"It's just that I'm your friend, Hank I'm your friend You know ow much I admire you"

Paul Larkin had always been unlucky Nothing he touched ever me off quite well, nothing ever quite failed or succeeded He was businessman, but he could not manage to remain for long in any le line of business At the moment, he was struggling with a modest ant that manufactured mining equipment

He had clung to Rearden for years, in awed admiration He me for advice, he asked for loans at times, but not often, the ans were modest and were always repaid, though not always on me His motive in the relationship seemed to resemble the need f an anemic person who receives a kind of living transfusion om the mere sight of a savagely overabundant vitality

Watching Larkin's efforts, Rearden felt what he did when he [illegible] matchstick It's so hard [illegible] So he gave advice, [illegible] ver he could

[illegible]

[illegible] You ought to be sure of it It's important [illegible] Rearden, and repeated with a kind of stressed insistence as if discharging a painful moral duty, "Hank, it's very important."

"I suppose so"

"In fact, that's what I came here to tell you"

"For any special reason?"

Larkin considered it and decided that the duty was discharged. No" he said

Rearden disliked the subject. He knew that it was necessary o have a man to protect him from the legislature, all industrialists had to employ such men But he had never given much attention o this aspect of his business, he could not quite convince himself hat it was necessary An inexplicable kind of distaste, part fastidiousness, part boredom, stopped him whenever he tried to consider t.

"Trouble is Paul," he said, thinking aloud, "that the men has to pick for that job are such a crummy lot."

Larkin looked away "That's life," he said.

"Damned if I see why. Can you tell me that? What's with the world?"

Larkin shrugged sadly "Why ask useless questions? How deep is the ocean? How high is the sky? Who is John Galt?"

Rearden sat up straight "No," he said sharply "No There s no reason to feel that way"

He got up His exhaustion had gone while he talked about his business He felt a sudden spurt of rebellion, a need to recapture and defiantly to reassert his own view of existence, that sense of it which he had held while walking home tonight and which now seemed threatened in some nameless manner

He paced the room his energy returning He looked at his family They were bewildered unhappy children—he thought—all of them, even his mother and he was foolish to resent their ineptitude it came from their helplessness, not from malice It was he who had to make himself learn to understand them, since he had so much to give, since they could never share his sense of joyous, boundless power

He glanced at them from across the room. His mother and Philip were engaged in some eager discussion, but he noted that they were not really eager, they were nervous Philip sat in a low chair, his stomach forward his weight on his shoulder blades, as if the miserable discomfort of his position were intended to punish the onlookers

"What s the matter Phil?' Rearden asked, approaching him "You look done in."

"I ve had a hard day," said Philip sullenly

"You re not the only one who works hard," said his mother "Others have problems, too—even if they're not billion-dollar, trans super-continental problems like yours

"Why that s good I always thought that Phil should find some interest of his own"

"Good? You mean you like to see your brother sweating hi health away? It amuses you, doesn t it? I always thought it did"

"Why no Mother I d like to help"

"You don't have to help You don t have to feel anything for an of us"

Rearden had never known what his brother was doing or wishe to do. He had sen Phi

... notice the expense Let him take it easy Rearden had thought for years let him hav a chance to choose his career without the strain of struggling fo a livelihood.

"What were you doing today, Phil?" he asked patiently

"It wouldn't interest you."

"It does interest me That s why I'm asking"

"I had to see twenty different people all over the place, fror here to Redding to Wilmington"

"What did you have to see them about?"

tic
ac
the last six months It seemed to be devoted to some sort of free lectures on psychology folk music and co-operative farming Rearden felt contempt for groups of that kind and saw no reason for a closer inquiry into their nature

He remained silent Philip added without being prompted "We need ten thousand dollars for a vital program but it s a martyr s task, trying to raise money There s not a speck of social conscience left in people When I think of the kind of bloated money bags I saw today—why they spend more than that on any whim but I couldn t squeeze just a hundred bucks a piece out of them which was all I asked They have no sense of moral duty no What are you laughing at? he asked sharply Rearden stood before him, grinning

It was so childishly blatant thought Rearden so helplessly crude the hint and the insult, offered together It would be so easy to squash Philip by returning the insult, he thought—by returning an insult which would be deadly because it would be true—that he could not bring himself to utter it Surely he thought the poor fool knows he s at my mercy knows he s opened himself to be hurt, so I don't have to do it, and my not doing it is my best answer which he won't be able to miss What sort of misery does he really live in, to get himself twisted quite so badly?

And then Rearden thought suddenly that he could break through Philip s chronic wretchedness for once give him a shock of pleasure the unexpected gratification of a hopeless desire He thought What do I care about the nature of his desire?—it s his just as Rearden Metal was mine—it must mean to him what that meant to me—let s see him happy just once it might teach him something—didn't I say that happiness is the agent of purification?—I'm celebrating tonight so let him share in it—it will be so much for him and so little for me

"Philip" he said smiling "call Miss Ives at my office tomorrow She'll have a check for you for ten thousand dollars"

Philip stared at him blankly it was neither shock nor pleasure it was just the empty stare of eyes that looked glassy

"Oh," said Philip then added, "We'll appreciate it very much" There was no emotion in his voice not even the simple one of greed.

Rearden could not understand his own feeling it was as if something leaden and empty were collapsing within him he felt both the weight and the emptiness together He knew it was disappointment, but he wondered why it was so gray and ugly

"It s very nice of you Henry" Philip said dryly "I m surprised I didn t expect it of you"

"Don't you understand it Phil?" said Lillian her voi clear and I ling "Henry s poured his metal today" Rearden. "Shall we declare it a national holiday

You re a good man, Henry " said his mother, and added 'but not often enough "

Rearden stood looking at Philip as if waiting

Philip looked away then raised his eyes and held Reardens [illegible] it" [illegible] ne [illegible]

[illegible] I don t care about it at all I only wanted you to be happy "

But that money is not for me I am not collecting it for any personal motive I have no selfish interest in the matter whatever" His voice was cold with a note of self-conscious virtue

Rearden turned away He felt a sudden loathing not because the words were hypocrisy but because they were true Philip meant them.

By the way Henry " Philip added "do you mind if I ask you to have Miss Ives give me the money in cash? Rearden turned back to him puzzled You see Friends of Global Progress are a very progressive group and they have always maintained that you represent the blackest element of social retrogression in the country so it would embarrass us you know to have your name on our list of contributors because somebody might accuse us of being in the pay of Hank Rearden "

He wanted to slap Philip s face But an almost unendurable contempt made him close his eyes instead

"All right, he said quietly 'you can have it in cash "

He walked away to the farthest window of the room and stood looking at the glow of the mills in the distance

He heard Larkin s voice crying after him "Damn it Hank, you shouldn t have given it to him!

Then Lillian s voice came, cold and gay But you re wrong Paul you re so wrong What would happen to Henry s vanity if he didn t have us to throw alms to? What would become of his strength if he d dn t have weaker people to dominate? What would he do w th himself if he didn t keep us around as dependents? It s quite all right really I m not criticizing him it s just a law of human nature "

She took the metal bracelet and held it up letting it glitter in the lamplight

"A chain " she said Appropriate isn t it? It s the chain by which he holds us all in bondage "

Chapter III THE TOP AND THE BOTTOM

The ceiling was that of a cellar so heavy and low that people stooped when crossing the room, as if the weight of the vaulting rested on their shoulders The circular booths of dark red leather were built into walls of stone that looked eaten by age and dampness There were no windows, only patches of blue light shooting

from dents in the masonry, the dead blue light proper for use in blackouts The place was entered by way of narrow steps that led down, as if descending deep under the ground This was the most expensive barroom in New York and it was built on the roof of a skyscraper.

Four men sat at a table Raised sixty floors above the city, they did not speak loudly as one speaks from a height in the freedom of air and space, they kept their voices low, as befitted a cellar

"Conditions and circumstances, Jim," said Orren Boyle "Con tions and circumstances absolutely beyond human control We had erything mapped to roll those rails, but unforeseen developments t in, which nobody could have prevented If you d only given a chance, Jim"

"Disunity," drawled James Taggart, "seems to be the basic cause all social problems My sister has a certain influence with a rtain element among our stockholders. Their disruptive tactics nnot always be defeated"

"You said it, Jim Disunity, that's the trouble It s my absolute inion that in our complex industrial society, no business enter- ise can succeed without sharing the burden of the problems of her enterprises"

Taggart took a sip of his drink and put it down again 'I wish ey'd fire that bartender," he said

"For instance, consider Associated Steel We've got the most odern plant in the country and the best organization That seems me to be an indisputable fact, because we got the Industrial Ef ciency Award of *Globe* Magazine last year So we can maintain at we've done our best and nobody can blame us But we cannot elp it if the iron ore situation is a national problem We could ot get the ore, Jim."

Taggart said nothing He sat with his elbows spread wide on e table top The table was uncomfortably small, and this made more uncomfortable for his three companions but they did not em to question his privilege

"Nobody can get ore any longer," said Boyle Natural ex austion of the mines, you know, and the wearing out of equip- ent, and shortages of materials, and difficulties of transportation, nd other unavoidable conditions"

"The ore industry is crumbling That's what's killing the mining quipment business," said Paul Larkin

"It's been proved that every business depends upon every other usiness," said Orren Boyle "So everybody ought to share the urdens of everybody else"

"That is, I think, true," said Wesley Mouch But nobody ever aid any attention to Wesley Mouch

"My purpose," said Orren Boyle, "is the preservation of a free conomy It s generally conceded that free economy is now on trial nless it proves its social value and assumes its social ies, the people won t stand for it If it doesn't develop a pirit it s done for, make no mistake about that"

Orren Boyle had appeared from nowhere, five years

since made the cover of every national news magazine He had started out with a hundred thousand dollars of his own and a two-hundred

an enor

panies

a chanc-

"The only justification of private property," said Orren Boyle, "is public service"

"That is, I think, indubitable," said Wesley Mouch

a large

on was

kind of swindle"

"Uh huh," said Taggart

"I hear there's not a single expert who's given a favorable report on it"

"No, not one"

"We've been improving steel rails for generations, and increasing their weight Now, is it true that these Rearden Metal rail are to be lighter than the cheapest grade of steel?'

"That's right," said Taggart 'Lighter"

"But it's ridiculous, Jim It's physically impossible For your heavy-duty, high speed, main line track?"

"That's right"

"But you're just inviting disaster"

"My sister is"

Taggart made the stem of his glass whirl slowly between two fingers There was a moment of silence

'The National Council of Metal Industries," said Orren Boyle, "passed a resolution to appoint a committee to study the question of Rearden Metal, inasmuch as its use may be an actual public hazard"

"That is, in my opinion, wise," said Wesley Mouch

"When everybody agrees," Taggart's voice suddenly went shrill, "when people are unanimous, how does one man dare to dissent? By what right? That's what I want to know—by what right?"

Boyle's eyes darted to Taggart's face, but the dim light of the room made it impossible to see faces clearly he saw only a pale, bluish smear

"When we think of the natural resources, at a time of critical shortage," Boyle said softly, "when we think of the crucial raw materials that are being wasted on an irresponsible private experiment, when we think of the ore . . "

He did not finish He glanced at Taggart again But Taggart seemed to know that Boyle was waiting and to find the silence enjoyable

"The public has a vital stake in natural resources, Jim, such as

can't remain indifferent to reckless, selfish waste

is a trustee

Taggart glanced at Boyle and smiled, the smile was pointed, it seemed to say that something in his words was an answer to something in the words of Boyle "The liquor they serve here is swill I suppose that's the price we have to pay for not being crowded by all kinds of rabble But I do wish they'd recognize that they're dealing with experts Since I hold the purse strings, I expect to get my money's worth and at my pleasure"

Boyle did not answer; his face had become sullen "Listen, Jim . ." he began heavily

Taggart smiled "What? I m listening"

"Jim, you will agree, I m sure, that there s nothing more destructive than a monopoly"

"Yes," said Taggart, "on the one hand On the other, there s the blight of unbridled competition"

"That's true That s very true The proper course is always in my opinion, in the middle. So it is, I think, the duty of society to snip the extremes, now isn't it?"

"Yes," said Taggart, "it is"

"Consider the picture in the iron-ore business The national output seems to be falling at an ungodly rate It threatens the existence of the whole steel industry Steel mills are shutting down all over the country There's only one mining company that's lucky enough not to be affected by the general conditions Its output seems to be plentiful and always available on schedule But who gets the benefit of it? Nobody except its owner Would you say that that s fair?"

"No," said Taggart, "it isn t fair"

"Most of us don't own iron mines How can we compete with a man who's got a corner on God s natural resources? Is it any wonder that he can always deliver steel, while we have to struggle and wait and lose our customers and go out of business? Is it in the public interest to let one man destroy an entire industry?

"No," said Taggart, 'it isn't"

"It seems to me that the national policy ought to be aimed at the objective of giving everybody a chance at his fair share of iron ore, with a view toward the preservation of the industry as a whole Don't you think so?"

"I think so"

Boyle sighed Then he said cautiously, But I guess there aren t many people in Washington capable of understanding a progressive social policy"

Taggart said slowly, "There are No, not many and not easy to approach, but there are I might speak to them"

Boyle picked up his drink and swallowed it in one gulp, as if he had heard all he had wanted to hear

"Speaking of progressive policies, Orren," said Taggart, might ask yourself whether at a time of transportation when so many railroads are going bankrupt and large left without rail service, whether it is in the public tolerate wasteful duplication of services and the

eat-dog competition of newcomers in territories where established companies have historical priority"

"Well now' said Boyle pleasantly, "that seems to be an interest ing question to consider I might discuss it with a few friends in the National Alliance of Railroads"

'Friendships said Taggart in the tone of an idle abstraction, "are more valuable than gold" Unexpectedly, he turned to Larkin

"Yes, of course"

I am counting on your many friendships"

They all seemed to know why Larkin did not answer at once, his shoulders seemed to shrink down, closer to the table 'If everybody could pull for a common purpose, then nobody would have to be hurt' he cried suddenly, in a tone of incongruous despair he saw Taggart watching him and added, pleading "I wish we didn t have to hurt anybody"

'That is an anti social attitude," drawled Taggart "People who are afraid to sacrifice somebody have no business talking about a common purpose

"But I m a student of history," said Larkin hastily "I recognize historical necessity

Good" said Taggart

I can t be expected to buck the trend of the whole world, ca I? Larkin seemed to plead, but the plea was not addressed t anyone Can I?

"You can t, Mr Larkin" said Wesley Mouch "You and I ar not to be blamed, if we—"

Larkin jerked his head away, it was almost a shudder, he coul not bear to look at Mouch.

Did you have a good time in Mexico Orren?' asked Taggar his voice suddenly loud and casual All of them seemed to kno that the purpose of their meeting was accomplished and whatev they had come here to understand was understood

"Wonderful place Mexico," Boyle answered cheerfully "Ve stimulating and thought provoking Their food rations are som thing awful though I got sick But they re working mighty hard put their country on its feet"

"How are things down there?"

"Pretty splendid it seems to me, pretty splendid Right at th moment however they re But then, what they re aiming is the future The People s State of Mexico has a great futu They'll beat us all in a few years"

"Did you go down to the San Sebastián Mines?"

The four figures at the table sat up straighter and tighter, all them had invested heavily in the stock of the San Sebastián Min

Boyle did not answer at once so that his voice seemed unexpect and unnaturally loud when it burst forth "Oh, sure, certainly, tha what I wanted to see most"

"And?"

"And what?"
"How are things going?"
Great. Great They must certainly have the biggest deposits of per on earth down inside that mountain!
Did they seem to be busy?'
Never saw such a busy place in my life"
What were they busy doing?"
Well you know with the kind of Spic superintendent they have vn there, I couldn t understand half of what he was talking about they're certainly busy"
'Any trouble of any kind?
Trouble? Not at San Sebastián Its private property the last

rs

or
tain I had dinner with the Minister of Culture and lunches with all rest of the boys"
"There ought to be a law against irresponsible gossip" said ggart sullenly "Lets have another drink"
He waved irritably at a waiter There was a small bar in a dark ner of the room, where an old wizened bartender stood for long etches of time without moving When called upon he moved with ntemptuous slowness His job was that of servant to mens relaxa n and pleasure but his manner was that of an embittered quack nistering to some guilty disease
The four men sat in silence until the waiter returned with their inks The glasses he placed on the table were four spots of faint e glitter in the semi-darkness, like four feeble jets of gas flame iggart reached for his glass and smiled suddenly
"Lets drink to the sacrifices to historical necessity," he said oking at Larkin
There was a moments pause in a lighted room it would have en the contest of two men holding each others eyes here they

with
nell s
ne?"

day
—"
"*One* train?"
"—is pretty measly service it seems to me and what a train!

pt in photographs What ——— id you drag it out

don't act as if you didn't know it, just tell me what's the gag?"

"Yes of course I knew it," said Taggart hastily "It was just ... You just happened to choose the one week when we had a little ... trouble with ... order but ...

... silent He seemed preoccupied with a problem of his own When he rose abruptly without apology, they rose, too, accepting it as a command

Larkin muttered smiling too strenuously, "It was a pleasure, Jim A pleasure Thats how great projects are born—over a drink with friends"

"Social reforms are slow " said Taggart coldly "It is advisable to be patient and cautious For the first time, he turned to Wesley Mouch "What I like about you, Mouch is that you don't talk too much

Wesley Mouch was Reardens Washington man

... when Tag... The trans... ... ed one ... against the sky sharp and straight like a raised sword In the distance beyond it there hung the calendar

Taggart fumbled irritably with his coat collar, buttoning it against the chill of the streets He had not intended to go back to the office tonight but he had to go back He had to see his sister

" a difficult undertaking ahead of us, Jim" Boyle was saying a difficult undertaking with so many dangers and complications and so much at stake "

"It all depends," James Taggart answered slowly, "on knowing the people who make it possible Thats what has to be know —who makes it possible"

* *

Dagny Taggart was nine years old when she decided that she would run the Taggart Transcontinental Railroad some day She stated it to herself when she stood alone between the rails, looking at the two straight lines of steel that went off into the distance and met in a single point What she felt was an arrogant pleasure in the way the track cut through the woods it did not belong in the midst of ancient trees among green branches that hung down to meet green brush and the lonely spears of wild flowers—but there it was The two steel lines were brilliant in the sun and the black ties were like the rungs of a ladder which she had to climb

It was not a sudden decision but only the final seal of words upon something she had known long ago In unspoken understanding as if bound by a vow it had never been necessary to take she and Eddie Willers had given themselves to the railroad from the first conscious days of their childhood

She felt a bored indifference toward the immediate world around her, toward other children and adults alike She took it as a regrettable accident, to be borne patiently for a while that she happened to be imprisoned among people who were dull She had caught a glimpse of another world and she knew that it existed somewhere, the world that had created trains bridges telegraph wires and signal lights winking in the night She had to wait, she thought, and grow up to that world

She never tried to explain why she liked the railroad Whatever it was that others felt, she knew that this was one emotion for which they had no equivalent and no response She felt the same emotion in school, in classes of mathematics, the only lessons she liked She felt the excitement of solving problems, the insolent delight of taking up a challenge and disposing of it without effort, the eagerness to meet another, harder test. She felt, at the same time, a growing respect for the adversary for a science that was so clean, so strict, so luminously rational Studying mathematics she felt, quite simply and at once "How great that men have done this" and "How wonderful that I'm so good at it" It was the joy of admiration and of ones own ability growing together Her feeling for the railroad was the same worship of the skill that had gone to make it, of the ingenuity of someone s clean, reasoning mind worship with a secret smile that said she would know how to make it better some day She hung around the tracks and the round houses like a humble student, but the humility had a touch of future pride, a pride to be earned.

"You re unbearably conceited," was one of the two sentences she heard throughout her childhood, even though she never spoke of her own ability The other sentence was "You re selfish She asked what was meant, but never received an answer She looked at the adults, wondering how they could imagine that she would feel guilt from an undefined accusation.

She was twelve years old when she told Eddie Willers that she would run the railroad when they grew up She was fifteen when it occurred to her for the first time that women did not run rail roads and that people might object. To hell with that she thought—and never worried about it again.

She went to work for Taggart Transcontinental at the age of sixteen Her father permitted it he was amused and a little curious She started as night operator at a small country station She had to work nights for the first few years, while attending a college of engineering

James Taggart began his career on the railroad at the same time, he was twenty-one He started in the Department of Public Rela tions

Dagnys rise among the men who operated Taggart Transcontinental was swift and uncontested She took positions of responsi bility because there was no one else to take them There were a few rare men of talent around her, but they were becoming rarer e year Her superiors who held the authority, seemed afra exercise it, they spent their time avoiding decisions, so

people what to do and they did it At every step of her rise, she did the work long before she was granted the title It was like advancing through empty rooms Nobody opposed her, yet nobody approved of her progress

Her father seemed astonished and proud of her, but he said nothing and there was sadness in his eyes when he looked at her in the office She was twenty nine years old when he died "There has always been a Taggart to run the railroad" was the last thing he said to her He looked at her with an odd glance it had the quality of a salute and of compassion together

The controlling stock of Taggart Transcontinental was left to James Taggart He was thirty four when he became President of the railroad Dagny had expected the Board of Directors to elect him but she had never been able to understand why they did it so eagerly They talked about tradition the president had always been the eldest son of the Taggart family they elected James Taggart in the same manner as they refused to walk under a ladder, to propitiate the same kind of fear They talked about his gift of "making railroads popular his good press his Washington ability" He seemed unusually skillful at obtaining favors from the Legislature

Dagny knew nothing about the field of Washington ability" or what such an ability implied But it seemed to be necessary, so she dismissed it with the thought that there were many kinds of work which were offensive yet necessary such as cleaning sewers somebody had to do it and Jim seemed to like it

She had never aspired to the presidency the Operating Department was her only concern When she went out on the line old railroad men who hated Jim said 'There will always be a Taggart to run the railroad looking at her as her father had looked She was armed against Jim by the conviction that he was not smart enough to harm the railroad too much and that she would always be able to correct whatever damage he caused

At sixteen sitting at her operator s desk watching the lighted windows of Taggart trains roll past she had thought that she had entered *her kind of world* In the years since she learned *that she* hadn t The adversary she found herself forced to fight was not worth matching or beating it was not a superior ability which she *would have found honor* in challenging it was ineptitude—a gray spread of cotton that seemed soft and shapeless that could offer no resistance to anything or anybody yet managed to be a barrier in her way She stood disarmed before the riddle of what made this possible She could find no answer

It was only in the first few years that she felt herself screaming silently at times for a glimpse of human ability a single glimpse of clean hard radiant competence She had fits of tortured longing for a friend or an enemy with a mind better than her own But the longing passed She had a job to do She did not have time to feel pain not often

The first step of the policy that James Taggart brought to the railroad was the construction of the San Sebastián Line Many men were responsible for it but to Dagny, one name stood written

across that venture a name that wiped out all others wherever she saw it It stood across five years of struggle across miles of wasted track across sheets of figures that recorded the losses of Taggart Transcontinental like a red trickle from a wound which would not heal—as it stood on the ticker tape of every stock exchange left in the world—as it stood on smokestacks in the red glare of furnaces melting copper—as it stood in scandalous head lines—as it stood on parchment pages recording the nobility of the centuries—as it stood on cards attached to flowers in the boudoirs of women scattered through three continents

The name was Francisco d Anconia

At the age of twenty three when he inherited his fortune Francisco d Anconia had been famous as the copper king of the world Now at thirty six he was famous as the richest man and the most spectacularly worthless playboy on earth He was the last descendant of one of the noblest families of Argentina He owned cattle ranches coffee plantations and most of the copper mines of Chile He owned half of South America and sundry mines scattered through the United States as small change

When Francisco d Anconia suddenly bought miles of bare moun tains in Mexico news leaked out that he had discovered vast de pos ts of copper He made no effort to sell stock in his venture the stock was begged out of his hands and he merely chose those whom he wished to favor from among the applicants His financial talent was called phenomenal no one had ever beaten him in any transaction—he added to his incredible fortune with every deal he touched and every step he made when he took the trouble to make it Those who censured him most were first to seize the chance of riding on his talent toward a share of his new wealth James Tag gart *Orren Boyle and their friends were among the heaviest* stockholders of the project which Francisco d Anconia had named the San Sebastián Mines

Dagny was never able to discover what influences prompted James Taggart to build a railroad branch from Texas into the wilderness of San Sebastian It seemed likely that he did not know it himself like a field without a windbreak he seemed open to any -rrent and the final sum was made by chance A few among ie Directors of Taggart Transcontinental objected to the project he company needed all its resources to rebuild the Rio Norte ine it could not do both But James Taggart was the road s new resident It was the first year of his administration He won

The People s State of Mexico was eager to co operate and signed contract guaranteeing for two hundred years the property right f Taggart Transcontinental to its railroad line in a country where o property rights existed Francisco d Anconia had obtained the ame guaranty for his mines

Dagny fought against the building of the San Sebastian Line She ought by means of whoever would listen to her but she was only n assistant in the Operating Department too young with uthority and nobody listened.

She was unable, then or since to understand the motives of

who decided to build the line Sitting as a helpless spectator, a minority member at one of the Board meetings she felt a strange evasiveness in the air of the room, in every speech, in every argument as if the real reason of their decision were never stated, but clear to everyone except herself

They spoke about the future importance of the trade with Mexico, about a rich stream of freight, about the large revenues assured to the exclusive carrier of an inexhaustible supply of copper. They proved it by citing Francisco d'Anconia's past achievements They did not mention any mineralogical facts about the San Sebastian Mines Few facts were available; the informatio which d Anconia had released was not very specific, but they di not seem to need facts

They spoke at great length about the poverty of the Mexican and their desperate need of railroads "They've never had a chance It is our duty to help an underprivileged nation to develop. / country it seems to me is its neighbors' keeper"

She sat listening and she thought of the many branch lines whic Taggart Transcontinental had had to abandon, the revenues of th great railroad had been falling slowly for many years She though of the ominous need of repairs, ominously neglected over the entir system Their policy on the problem of maintenance was not policy but a game they seemed to be playing with a piece of rubbe that could be stretched a little, then a little more

The Mexicans it seems to me, are a very diligent people, crushe by their primitive economy How can they become industrialize if nobody lends them a hand?' "When considering an investmen we should in my opinion take a chance on human beings, rath than on purely material factors"

She thought of an engine that lay in a ditch beside the Rio Nor Line, because a splice bar had cracked She thought of the five da when all traffic was stopped on the Rio Norte Line, because retaining wall had collapsed pouring tons of rock across the track

"Since a man must think of the good of his brothers before l thinks of his own it seems to me that a nation must think of i neighbors before it thinks of itself'

She thought of a newcomer called Ellis Wyatt whom people we beginning to watch because his activity was the first trickle of torrent of goods about to burst from the dying stretches of Col rado The Rio Norte Line was being allowed to run its way to final collapse, just when its fullest efficiency was about to be need and used

"Material greed isn t everything There are non material ideals consider" "I confess to a feeling of shame when I think that own a huge network of railways, while the Mexican *people* ha nothing but one or two inadequate lines" "The old theory economic self-sufficiency has been ...

[illegible]

... very little of it was available

They spoke also at the same session, in the same speeches about the efficiency of the Mexican government that held complete control of everything Mexico had a great future they said and would become a dangerous competitor in a few years "Mex cos got discipline the men of the Board kept saying with a note of envy in their voices

James Taggart let it be understood—in unfinished sentences and undefined hints—that his friends in Washington whom he never named wished to see a railroad line built in Mexico that such a line would be of great help in matters of internat onal diplomacy that the good will of the public opinion of the world would more than repay Taggart Transcontinental for its investment.

They voted to build the San Sebastian Line at a cost of thirty million dollars

When Dagny left the Board room and walked through the clean cold air of the streets she heard two words repeated clearly in sistently in the numbed emptiness of her mind Get out Get out Get out

She listened aghast. The thought of leaving Taggart Transcon tinental did not belong among the things she could hold as con ceivable She felt terror not at the thought but at the question of what had made her think it She shook her head angrily she told herself that Taggart Transcontinental would now need her more than ever

Two of the Directors resigned so did the Vice President in Charge of Operation He was replaced by a friend of James Taggart.

Steel rail was laid across the Mexican desert—while orders were issued to reduce the speed of trains on the Rio Norte Line because the track was shot A depot of reinforced concrete with marble columns and mirrors was built amidst the dust of an unpaved square in a Mexican village—while a train of tank cars carrying oil went hurtling down an embankment and into a blazing junk pile because a rail had split on the Rio Norte Line Ellis Wyatt did not wait for the court to decide whether the accident was an act of G[illegible]
of his oil [illegible]
small an[illegible]
sent the [illegible]
Wyatt Oil grew as factories grew in nearby valleys—as a band of ra ls and ties grew at the rate of two miles a month across the scraggly fields of Mexican corn

Dagny was thirty two years old when she told James Taggart that she would resign She had run the Operating Department for the past three years without title credit or authority She was defeated by loathing for the hours the days the nights she had to waste circumventing the interference of Jim s friend who bore the title of Vice President in Charge of Operation. The man had no policy and any decision he made was always hers but he made it only after he had made every effort to make it impossib[illegible]
she delivered to her brother was an ultimatum He
Dagny y[illegible] woman as Operating

It's unheard of! The Board won't consider it!" "Then I'm through," she answered

She did not think of what she would do with the rest of her life To face leaving Taggart Transcontinental was like waiting to have her legs amputated, she thought she would let it happen, then take up the load of whatever was left

She never understood why the Board of Directors voted unanimously to make her Vice-President in Charge of Operation

It was she who finally gave them their San Sebastián Line When she took over, the construction had been under way for three years, one third of its track was laid, the cost to date was beyond the authorized total She fired Jim's friends and found a contractor who completed the job in one year

The San Sebastián Line was now in operation No surge of trade had come across the border, nor any trains loaded with copper A few carloads came clattering down the mountains from San Sebastián, at long intervals The mines, said Francisco d'Anconia, were still in the process of development The drain on Taggart Transcontinental had not stopped.

Now she sat at the desk in her office, as she had sat for many evenings, trying to work out the problem of what branches could save the system and in how many years

The Rio Norte Line, when rebuilt, would redeem the rest As she looked at the sheets of figures announcing losses and more losses she did not think of the long, senseless agony of the Mexican venture She thought of a telephone call "Hank, can you save us? Can you give us rail on the shortest notice and the longest credit possible?" A quiet, steady voice had answered, "Sure."

The thought was a point of support She leaned over the sheets of paper on her desk finding it suddenly easier to concentrate There was one thing, at least, that could be counted upon not to crumble when needed.

James Taggart crossed the anteroom of Dagny's office, still holding the kind of confidence he had felt among his companions at the barroom half an hour ago When he opened her door, the confidence vanished He crossed the room to her desk like a child being dragged to punishment, storing the resentment for all his future years

He saw a head bent over sheets of paper, the light of the desk lamp glistening on strands of disheveled hair, a white shirt clinging to her shoulders, its loose folds suggesting the thinness of her body

"What is it, Jim?"

"What are you trying to pull on the San Sebastián Line?"

She raised her head "Pull? Why?"

"What sort of schedule are we running down there and what kind of trains?"

She laughed, the sound was gay and a little weary "You really ought to read the reports sent to the president's office, Jim, once in a while"

"What do you mean?"

"We've been running that schedule and those trains on the San Sebastián for the last three months."

"*One* passenger train a day?"

"—in the morning And one freight train every other night."

"Good God! On an important branch like that?"

"The important branch can't pay even for those two trains."

"But the Mexican people expect real service from us!"

"I'm sure they do"

"They need trains!"

"For what?"

"For . . . To help them develop local industries How do you expect them to develop if we don't give them transportation?"

"I don't expect them to develop"

"That's just your personal opinion I don't see what right you had to take it upon yourself to cut our schedules Why, the copper traffic alone will pay for everything"

"When?"

He looked at her, his face assumed the satisfaction of a person about to utter something that has the power to hurt. "You dont doubt the success of those copper mines, do you?—when it's Francisco d'Anconia who's running them?" He stressed the name, watching her

She said, "He may be your friend, but—"

"*My* friend? I thought he was *yours*"

She said steadily, "Not for the last ten years"

"Th ... the smartest operators ... ean, a *business* venture ... y into those mines, so

"When will you realize that Francisco d'Anconia has turned into a worthless bum?"

He chuckled 'I always thought that that s what he was—as far as his personal character is concerned But you didn't share my opinion Yours was opposite. Oh my, how opposite! Surely you remember our quarrels on the subject? Shall I quote some of the things you *said* about him? I can only surmise as to some of the things you *did*"

"Do you wish to discuss Francisco d'Anconia? Is that what you came here for?"

His face showed the anger of failure—because hers showed nothing. "You know damn well what I came here for' he snapped I've heard some incredible things about our trains in Mexico"

"What things?"

"What sort of rolling stock are you using down there?"

"The worst I could find"

"You admit that?"

"I ve stated it on paper in the reports I sent you."

"Is it true that you re using wood burning locomotives?"

"Eddie found them for me in somebody's abandoned roundhou[se] down in Louisiana. He couldn't even learn the name of the ra[il]road."

"And that s what you're running as Taggart trains?"
"Yes '
'What in hell s the big idea? What's going on? I want to know what's going on!
She spoke evenly looking straight at him 'If you want to know, I have left nothing but junk on the San Sebastián Line, and as little of that as possible I have moved everything that could be moved—switch engines shop tools, even typewriters and mirrors—out of Mexico '
'Why in blazes?"
"So that the looters won't have too much to loot when they nationalize the line"
He leaped to his feet "You won t get away with that! This is one time you won t get away with it! To have the nerve to pull such a low unspeakable . just because of some vicious rumors, when we have a contract for two hundred years and "
Jim" she said slowly, "there's not a car, engine or ton of coal that we can spare anywhere on the system"
I won t permit it I absolutely won't permit such an outrageous policy toward a friendly people who need our help Material greed isn t everything After all, there are non material considerations, even though you wouldn t understand them!"
She pulled a pad forward and picked up a pencil "All right, Jim How many trains do you wish me to run on the San Sebastian Line?"
"Huh?"
"Which runs do you wish me to cut and on which of our lines—in order to get the Diesels and the steel coaches?
"I don t want you to cut any runs!"
"Then where do I get the equipment for Mexico?'
"That s for you to figure out It s *your* job"
"I am not able to do it You will have to decide"
"That s your usual rotten trick—switching the responsibility to me!"
"I m waiting for orders, Jim."
[illegible]
[illegible] Sebastián schedule will [illegible]
[illegible] meeting next month I'll demand a decision, once and for all, on how far the Operating Department is to be permitted to exceed its authority You re going to have to answer for this"
"I'll answer for it"
She was back at her work before the door had closed on James Taggart
When she [illegible] I glanced up, the [illegible] d become a glow- [illegible] rose reluctantly [illegible] it she knew that she was, tonight
The outer office was dark and empty, her staff had gone Only

ddie Willers was still there, at his desk in his glass partitioned nclosure that looked like a cube of light in a corner of the large oom. She waved to him on her way out

She did not take the elevator to the lobby of the building but to e concourse of the Taggart Terminal She liked to walk through on her way home

She had always felt that the concourse looked like a temple lancing up at the distant ceiling, she saw dim vaults supported by ant granite columns, and the tops of vast windows glazed by arkness. The vaulting held the solemn peace of a cathedral, spread protection high above the rushing activity of men.

Dominating the concourse, but ignored by the travelers as a abitual sight, stood a statue of Nathaniel Taggart, the founder f the railroad Dagny was the only one who remained aware of and had never been able to take it for granted To look at that atue *whenever she crossed the concourse, was the only form of* rayer she knew

Nathaniel Taggart had been a penniless adventurer who had come om somewhere in New England and built a railroad across a ontinent, in the days of the first steel rails His railroad still stood is battle to build it had dissolved into a legend because people referred not to understand it or to believe it possible

He was a man who had never accepted the creed that others ad the right to stop him He set his goal and moved toward it, is way as straight as one of his rails He never sought any loans, onds, subsidies, land grants or legislative favors from the government. He obtained money from the men who owned it, going from oor to door—from the mahogany doors of bankers to the clapoard doors of lonely farmhouses He never talked about the public ood He merely told people that they would make big profits on is railroad, he told them why he expected the profits and he gave is reasons He had good reasons Through all the generations that ollowed, Taggart Transcontinental was one of the few railroads hat never went bankrupt and the only one whose controlling stock emained in the hands of the founder s descendants

In his lifetime, the name "Nat Taggart" was not famous, but otorious, it was repeated, not in homage, but in resentful curiosity, and if anyone admired him it was as one admires a successful bandit. *Yet no penny of his wealth had been obtained by* orce or fraud he was guilty of nothing except that he earned his wn fortune and never forgot that it was his

Many stories were whispered about him It was said that in the wilderness of the Middle West, he murdered a state legislator who attempted ... when he

he had no trouble with legislators from then on

It was said that Nat Taggart had staked his life on his many times, but once, he staked more than his life funds, with the line suspended, he threw

three flights of stairs a distinguished gentleman who offered him a loan from the government Then he pledged his wife as security for a loan from a millionaire who hated him and admired her beauty He repaid the loan on time and did not have to surrender his pledge The deal had been made with his wife's consent She was a great beauty from the noblest family of a southern state and she had been disinherited by her family because she eloped with Nat Taggart when he was only a ragged young adventurer

Dagny regretted at times that Nat Taggart was her ancestor What she felt for him did not belong in the category of unchosen family affections She did not want her feeling to be the thing one was supposed to owe an uncle or a grandfather She was incapable of love for any object not of her own choice and she resented anyone's demand for it But had it been possible to choose an ancestor, she would have chosen Nat Taggart, in voluntary homage and with all of her gratitude

Nat Taggart's statue was copied from an artist's sketch of him, the only record ever made of his appearance He had lived far into old age but one could never think of him except as he was on that sketch—as a young man In her childhood, his statue had been Dagny's first concept of the exalted When she was sent to church or to school and heard people using that word, she thought that she knew what they meant she thought of the statue

The statue was of a young man with a tall, gaunt body and an angular face He held his head as if he faced a challenge and found joy in his capacity to meet it All that Dagny wanted of life was contained in the desire to hold her head as he did

Tonight, she looked at the statue when she walked across the concourse It was a moment's rest, it was as if a burden she could not name were lightened and as if a faint current of air were touching her forehead

In a corner of the concourse, by the main entrance, there was a small newsstand The owner, a quiet courteous old man with an air of breeding, had stood behind his counter for twenty years He had owned a cigarette factory once, but it had gone bankrupt, and he had resigned himself to the lonely obscurity of his little stand in the midst of an eternal whirlpool of strangers He had no family or friends left alive He had a hobby which was his only pleasure he gathered cigarettes from all over the world for his private collection, he knew every brand made or that had ever been made

Dagny liked to stop at his newsstand on her way out. He seemed to be part of the Taggart Terminal like an old watchdog too feeble to protect it, but reassuring by the loyalty of his presence He liked to see her coming because it amused him to think that he alone knew the importance of the young woman in a sports coat and a slanting hat, who came hurrying anonymously through the crowd

She stopped tonight, as usual, to buy a package of cigarettes "How is the collection?" she asked him 'Any new specimens?'

He smiled sadly, shaking his head "No Miss Taggart There aren't any new brands made anywhere in the world Even the old ones are going, one after another There's only five or six kinds

left selling now There used to be dozens People aren t making anything new any more"

"They will That s only temporary"

He glanced at her and did not answer Then he said, "I like cigarettes Miss Taggart. I like to think of fire held in a man s hand Fire, a dangerous force, tamed at his fingertips I often wonder about the hours when a man sits alone watching the smoke of a cigarette, thinking I wonder what great things have come from such hours When a man thinks, there is a spot of fire alive in his mind—and it is proper that he should have the burning point of a cigarette as his one expression"

"Do they ever think?" she asked involuntarily, and stopped the question was her one personal torture and she did not want to discuss it.

The old man looked as if he had noticed the sudden stop and understood it, but he did not start discussing it he said instead. "I don t like the thing that s happening to people, Miss Taggart"

"What?"

"I don't know But I've watched them here for twenty years and I've seen the change They used to rush through here and it was wonderful to watch, it was the hurry of men who knew where they were going and were eager to get there Now they re hurrying because they are afraid. It s not a purpose that drives them it's fear They're not going anywhere they re escaping And I don't think they know what it is that they want to escape They don t look at one another They jerk when brushed against They smile too much, but it s an ugly kind of smiling it s not joy it s pleading I don't know what it is that s happening to the world" He shrugged Oh well, who is John Galt?"

"He s just a meaningless phrase!"

She was startled by the sharpness of her own voice, and she added in apology, "I don t like that empty piece of slang What does it mean? Where did it come from?"

"Nobody knows," he answered slowly

"Why do people keep saying it? Nobody seems able to explain just what it stands for, yet they all use it as if they knew the meaning"

"Why does it disturb you?" he asked

"I don't like what they seem to mean when they say it."

"I don't, either, Miss Taggart."

* *

Eddie Willers ate his dinners in the employees' cafeteria of the Taggart Terminal There was a restaurant in the building patronized by Taggart executives but he did not like it. The cafeteria [illegible] at home

[illegible] nth walls

[illegible] ights and

[illegible]

of glass and chromium a sense of space and light

There was a railroad worker whom Eddie Willers [illegible] in the cafeteria. Eddie liked his face They had been [illegible]

a chance conversation once, and then it became their habit to dine together whenever they happened to meet.

Eddie had forgotten whether he had ever asked the worker's name or the nature of his job, he supposed that the job wasn't much, because the man's clothes were rough and grease-stained The man was not a person to him, but only a silent presence with an enormous intensity of interest in the one thing which was the meaning of his own life in Taggart Transcontinental.

Tonight, coming down late, Eddie saw the worker at a table in a corner of the half-deserted room Eddie smiled happily, waving to him, and carried his tray of food to the worker's table.

In the privacy of their corner, Eddie felt at ease, relaxing after the long strain of the day He could talk as he did not talk anywhere else admitting things he would not confess to anyone, thinking aloud, looking into the attentive eyes of the worker across the table

"The Rio Norte Line is our last hope," said Eddie Willers "But it will save us We'll have at least one branch in good condition, where it's needed most, and that will help to save the rest . . . It's funny—isn't it?—to speak about a last hope for Taggart Transcontinental Do you take it seriously if somebody tells you that a meteor is going to destroy the earth? . . I don't, either. . . . 'From Ocean to Ocean, forever'—that's what we heard all through our childhood, she and I No, they didn't say 'forever,' but that's what it meant . You know, I'm not any kind of a great man [illegible]

me to stay, but there was a light under her door, long after all the others had gone Yes, she's gone home now . . . Trouble? Oh, there's always trouble in the office But she's not worried She knows she can pull us through . . . Of course, it's bad We're having many more accidents than you hear about. We lost two Diesels again, last week One—just from old age, the other—in a head-on collision Yes, we have Diesels on order, at the United Locomotive Works, but we've waited for them for two years I don't know whether we'll ever get them or not . . . God, do we need them! Motive power—you can't imagine how important that is That's the heart of everything . . . What are you smiling at? . . Well, as I was saying, it's bad. But at least the Rio Norte Line is set. The first shipment of rail will get to the site in a few weeks In a year, we'll run the first train on the new track Nothing's going to stop us, this time. . . . Sure, I know who's going to lay the rail McNamara, of Cleveland He's the contractor who finished the San Sebastián Line for us There, at least, is one man who knows his job So we're safe We can count on him There aren't many good contractors left . . . We're rushed as hell, but I like it I've been coming to the office an hour *earlier than* usual, but she beats me to it. She's always there first . . . What? . I don't know what she does at night Nothing much, I guess.

No she never goes out with anyone She sits at home mostly and listens to music She plays records What do you care which records? Richard Halley She loves the music of Richard Halley Outside the railroad, thats the only thing she loves"

Chapter IV THE IMMOVABLE MOVERS

Motive power—thought Dagny looking up at the Taggart Building in the twilight—was its first need motive power to keep that building standing· movement, to keep it immovable It did not rest on piles driven into granite it rested on the engines that rolled across a continent.

She felt a dim touch of anxiety She was back from a trip to the plant of the United Locomotive Works in New Jersey where she had gone to see the president of the company in person She had learned nothing neither the reason for the delays nor any ind ca tion of the date when the Diesel engines would be produced. The president of the company had talked to her for two hours But none of his answers had connected to any of her questions His manner had conveyed a peculiar note of condescending reproach whenever she attempted to make the conversation specific as if she were giving proof of ill breeding by breaking some unwritten code known to everyone else

On her way through the plant, she had seen an enormous piece of machinery left abandoned in a corner of the yard It had been a precision machine tool once, long ago of a kind that could not be bought anywhere now It had not been worn out it had been rotted by neglect, eaten by rust and the black drippings of a dirty oil She had turned her face away from it. A sight of that nature always blinded her for an instant by the burst of too violent an anger She did not know why she could not define her own feeling· she knew only that there was in her feeling, a scream of protest against injustice, and that it was a response to something much beyond an old piece of machinery

The rest of her staff had gone when she entered the anteroom of her office, but Eddie Willers was still there waiting for her She knew at once that something had happened by the way he looked and the way he followed her silently into her office.

"Whats the matter Eddie?"

"McNamara quit."

She looked at him blankly "What do you mean, quit?"

"Left. Retired. Went out of business."

"McNamara, our contractor?"

"Yes."

"But thats impossible!"

"I know it."

"What happened? Why?"

"Nobody knows"

Taking her time deliberately she unbuttoned at her desk, started to pull off her gloves Then she

at the beginning, Eddie Sit down."

He spoke quietly but he remained standing I talked to his chief engineer long distance The chief engineer called from Cleveland, to tell us Thats all he said He knew nothing else

What did he say?

"That McNamara has closed his business and gone"

"Where?

He doesnt know Nobody knows"

She noticed that she was holding with one hand two empty fingers of the glove of the other the glove half removed and forgotten. She pulled it off and dropped it on the desk

Eddie said Hes walked out on a pile of contracts that are worth a fortune He had a waiting list of clients for the next three years " She said nothing He added, his voice low, "I wouldn't be frightened if I could understand it But a thing that can't have any possible reason She remained silent "He was the best contractor in the country"

They looked at each other What she wanted to say was Oh God Eddie! Instead her voice even she said, Dont worry We'll find another contractor for the Rio Norte Line"

It was late when she left her office Outside on the sidewalk at the door of the building she paused looking at the streets She felt suddenly empty of energy of purpose of desire, as if a motor had crackled and stopped

A faint glow streamed from behind the buildings into the sky, the reflection of thousands of unknown lights the electric breath of the city She wanted to rest. To rest she thought and to find enjoyment somewhere

Her work was all she had or wanted But there were times like tonight, when she felt that sudden peculiar emptiness which was not emptiness but silence not despair but immobility as if nothing within her were destroyed but everything stood still Then she felt the wish to find a moments joy outside the wish to be held as a passive spectator by some work or sight of greatness Not to make it, she thought, but to accept not to begin, but to respond not to create but to admire I need it to let me go on she thought, because joy is ones fuel

She had always been—she closed her eyes with a faint smile of amusement and pain—the motive power of her own happiness For once she wanted to feel herself carried by the power of someone [illegible]

ing a single glimpse just to wave her arm and say Someone is going somewhere

She started walking slowly her hands in the pockets of her coat, the shadow of her slanting hat brim across her face The buildings around her rose to such heights that her glance could not find the sky She thought It has taken so much to build this city, it should have so much to offer

Above the door of a shop, the black hole of a radio loudspeaker was hurling sounds at the streets They were the sounds of a symphony concert being given somewhere in the city They were a long screech without shape, as of cloth and flesh being torn at random They scattered with no melody, no harmony no rhythm to hold them If music was emotion and emotion came from thought, ... helpless,

... The ... tickets, ... " said a placard "The penetrating study of a businessman's greed A fearless revelation of man's depravity"

She walked past a movie theater Its lights wiped out half a block, leaving only a huge photograph and some letters suspended in blazing mid air The photograph was of a smiling young woman, looking at her face, one felt the weariness of having seen it for years even while seeing it for the first time The letters said " in a momentous drama giving the answer to the great problem Should a woman tell?"

She walked past the door of a night club A couple came staggering out to a taxicab The girl had blurred eyes a perspiring face, ... that had slipped off ... aling too ... manner of ... her naked ... cipating a ... write ob- ... on These ... of their ... anywhere, ... for many years

At the corner of the street where she lived, she bought a newspaper and went home.

Her apartment was two rooms on the top floor of a skyscraper The sheets of glass in the corner window of her living room made it look like the prow of a ship in motion, and the lights of the city were like phosphorescent sparks on the black waves of steel and stone When she turned on a lamp, long triangles of shadow cut the bare walls in a geometrical pattern of light rays broken by a few angular pieces of furniture

She stood in the middle of the room, alone between sky and city There was only one thing that could give her the feeling she wanted to experience tonight, it was the only form of enjoyment she had found She turned to a phonograph and put on a record of ...

... st work he had written The ... the sights of the streets away ... great cry of rebellion It was a ... rture, a denial of suffering a

denial [illegible] to break free The sounds were h[illegible]
is the [illegible]
sity?— [illegible]
ment have we been sentenced for it, and by whom? . . The sounds of torture became defiance the statement of agony became a hymn to a distant vision for whose sake anything was worth enduring even this It was the song of rebellion—and of a desperate quest

She sat still, her eyes closed, listening

No one knew what had happened to Richard Halley, or why The story of his life had been like a summary written to dam greatness by showing the price one pays for it It had been a pro cession of years spent in garrets and basements, years that ha taken the gray tinge of the walls imprisoning a man whose musi overflowed with violent color It had been the gray of a struggl against long flights of unlighted tenement stairs, against froze plumbing against the price of a sandwich in an ill-smelling delica essen store against the faces of men who listened to music, the eyes empty It had been a struggle without the relief of violenc without the recognition of finding a conscious enemy, with on a deaf wall to batter a wall of the most effective soundproofing i difference, that swallowed blows chords and screams—a battle silence for a man who could give to sounds a greater eloquence th they had ever carried—the silence of obscurity, of loneliness the nights when some rare orchestra played one of his works a he looked at the darkness knowing that his soul went in tremblin widening circles from a radio tower through the air of the ci but there were no receivers tuned to hear it.

"The music of Richard Halley has a quality of the heroic O age has outgrown that stuff" said one critic "The music of Richa Halley is out of key with our times It has a tone of ecstasy W cares for ecstasy nowadays?" said another

His life had been a summary of the lives of all the men wh reward is a monument in a public park a hundred years after t time when a reward can matter—except that Richard Halley not die soon enough He lived to see the night which, by the cepted laws of history he was not supposed to see He was for three years old and it was the opening night of *Phaethon* an op he had written at the age of twenty four He had changed [illegible]

[illegible] Halley's opera Phaethon s ceeded The opera had been performed then, nineteen years a [illegible]

On the night when the opera was presented again, nineteen ye later, *the last sounds of the music crashed* into the sounds of

greatest ovation the opera house had ever heard The ancient walls could not contain it, the sounds of cheering burst through to the lobbies, to the stairs to the streets to the boy who had walked those streets nineteen years ago

Dagny was in the audience on the night of the ovation. She was one of the few who had known the music of Richard Halley much earlier but she had never seen him She saw him being pushed out

staring at a question

"The music of Richard Halley" wrote a critic next morning "belongs to mankind It is the product and the expression of the greatness of the people" "There is an inspiring lesson," said a minister "in the life of Richard Halley He has had a terrible struggle, but what does that matter? It is proper it is noble that he should have endured suffering injustice abuse at the hands of s brothers—in order to enrich their lives and teach them to ap eciate the beauty of great music"

On the day after the opening, Richard Halley retired.

He gave no explanation He merely told his publishers that his areer was over He sold them the rights to his works for a modest um, even though he knew that his royalties would now bring him fortune He went away leaving no address It was eight years go no one had seen h m since

Dagny listened to the Fourth Concerto her head thrown back, er eyes closed She lay half-stretched across the corner of a couch, er body relaxed and still but tension stressed the shape of her outh on her motionless face a sensual shape drawn in lines of onging

After a while she opened her eyes She noticed the newspaper he had thrown down on the couch She reached for it absently, o turn the vapid headlines out of sight The paper fell open She aw the photograph of a face she knew and the heading of a tory Sh ... de

ling said that
ht She would

She sat looking down at the newspaper on the floor Don't read it, she thought don t look at it But the face she thought, had not changed How could a face remain the same when everything else was gone? She wished they had not caught a picture of him when he smiled. That kind of smile d d not belong in the pages of a newspaper It was the smile of a man who is able to see to know and to create the glory of existence It was the mocking challeng ing sm le of a brilliant intell gence Don t read it she thought not now—not to that music—oh, not to that music!

She reached for the paper and opened it.

The story said that Senor Francisco d Anconia had granted an interview to the press in his su te at the Wayne Falkland Hotel

He said that he had come to New York for two important reasons a hat-check girl at the Cub Club, and the liverwurst at Moe's Delicatessen on Third Avenue He had nothing to say about the coming divorce trial of Mr and Mrs Gilbert Vail. Mrs. Vail, a lady of noble breeding and unusual loveliness, had taken a shot at her distinguished young husband, some months ago, publicly declaring that she wished to get rid of him for the sake of her lover, Francisco d'Anconia. She had given to the press a detailed account of her secret romance, including a description of the night of last New Year's Eve which she had spent at d'Anconia's villa in the Andes Her husband had survived the shot and had sued for divorce She had countered with a suit for half of her husband's millions, and with a recital of his private life which, she said, made hers look innocent All of that had been splashed over the newspapers for weeks But Señor d'Anconia had nothing to say about [illegible]

of the scandal was about to explode on the front pages But they [illegible]

down to her knees, trembled in sudden jolts once in a while.

The great chords of Halley's music went on, filling the room, piercing the glass of the windows, streaming out over the city. She was hearing the music It was *her* quest, her cry.

* *

James Taggart glanced about the living room of his apartment, wondering what time it was, he did not feel like moving to find his watch. He sat in an armchair, dressed in wrinkled pajamas, barefooted, it was too much trouble to look for his slippers The light of the gray sky in the windows hurt his eyes, still sticky with sleep He felt, inside his skull, the nasty heaviness which is about to become a headache He wondered angrily why he had stumbled out into the living room Oh yes, he remembered, to look for the time.

He slumped sidewise over the arm of the chair and caught sigh[illegible]

[illegible]

awful in a negligee, thought Taggart she was ever so much better in a riding habit, in the photographs on the society pages of the newspapers She was a lanky girl, all bones and loose joints that did not move smoothly She had a homely face, a bad complexion and a look of impertinent condescension derived from the fact that she belonged to one of the very best families

"Aw, hell!" she said at nothing in particular stretching herself to limber up "Jim, where are your nail clippers? I've got to trim my toenails"

"I don't know I have a headache Do it at home"

"You look unappetizing in the morning," she said indifferently "You look like a snail"

"Why don t you shut up?"

She wandered aimlessly about the room "I dont want to go home," she said with no particular feeling "I hate morning Here s another day and nothing to do I've got a tea session on for this after [illegible]

"Are you through in the bathroom?" he asked "I have to dress I have an important engagement today"

"Go right in. I dont mind. I'll share the bathroom with you I hate to be rushed."

While he shaved, he saw her dressing in front of the open bath room door She took a long time twisting herself into her girdle, hooking garters to her stockings, pulling on an ungainly, expensive tweed suit. The harlequin negligee, picked from an advertisement in the smartest fashion magazine was like a uniform which she knew to be expected on certain occasions, which she had worn dutifully for a specified purpose and then discarded.

The nature of their relationship had the same quality There was no passion in it, no desire, no actual pleasure not even a sense of shame To them, the act of sex was neither joy nor sin It meant nothing They had heard that men and women were supposed to sleep together, so they did

"Jim, why don't you take me to the Armenian restaurant tonight?" she asked "I love shish kebab"

"I can t," he answered angrily through the soap lather on his face "I've got a busy day ahead."

"Why don t you cancel it?"

"What?"

"Whatever it is"

"It is very important, my dear It is a meeting of our Board of Directors"

"Oh dont be stuffy about your damn railroad. Its boring I hate businessmen They're dull."

He did not answer

She glanced at him slyly and her voice acquired a livelier note when she drawled, "Jock Benson said that you have a soft snap on

that railroad anyway because it s your sister who runs the whole works

"Oh he did did he?"

"I think that your sister is awful I think it s disgusting—a woman acting like a grease monkey and posing around like a big executive.

he door
ace, sar
ion.
a putting

No? she said interested "Really?

-ly put her in

he

"No no You wouldn t understand It s merely that she s gone too far for once and she s going to get slapped down She s pulled an inexcusable sort of stunt without consulting anybody It s a serious offense against our Mexican neighbors When the Board

ting

to

the washbowl adding cheerfully Maybe I *will* take you out to night and buy you some shish kebab"

The telephone rang

He lifted the receiver The operator announced a long-distanc call from Mexico City

The hysterical voice that came on the wire was that of his politica man in Mexico

"I couldn t help it, Jim!" it gulped I couldn t help it! W had no warning I swear to God nobody suspected nobody saw

* *

" and therefore, I can assure the gentlemen of the Board that there is no occasion for panic The event of this morning is a regrettable development, but I have full confidence—based on my knowledge of the inner processes shaping our foreign policy in Washington—that our government will negotiate an equitable settlement with the government of the People s State of Mexico and tha we will receive full and just compensation for our property"

James Taggart stood at the long table addressing the Board o Directors His voice was precise and monotonous, it connoted safety

"I am glad to report however that I foresaw the possibility o such a turn of events and took every precaution to protect th

shall have the exact figures computed and submit them to you. I

ton, our economic consultant, who recommended the construction of the San Sebastián Line, and of Mr Jules Mott, our representative in Mexico City."

The men sat around the long table, listening They did not think of what they would have to do, but of what they would have to say to the men they represented. Taggart's speech gave them what they needed.

* *

Orren Boyle was waiting for him, when Taggart returned to his office. Once they were alone, Taggart's manner changed. He leaned against the desk, sagging, his face loose and white.

"Well?" he asked.

Boyle spread his hands out helplessly "I've checked, Jim," he said "It's straight all right d'Anconia's lost fifteen million dollars of his own money in those mines. No, there wasn't anything phony about that, he didn't pull any sort of trick, he put up his own cash and now he's lost it."

He's too smart

"I sure hope so."

"He's outwitted some of the slickest combinations of money-grubbers on earth. Is he going to be taken by a bunch of Greaser politicians with a decree? He must have something on them, and he'll get the last word, and we must be sure to be in on it, too!"

"That's up to you, Jim. You're his friend."

"Friend be damned! I hate his guts"

He pressed a button for his secretary. The secretary entered uncertainly, looking unhappy, he was a young man, no longer too young, with a bloodless face and the well bred manner of genteel poverty.

"Did you get me an appointment with Francisco d'Anconia?" snapped Taggart.

"No, sir."

"But, God damn it, I told you to call the—"

"I wasn't able to, sir. I have tried"

"Well, try again."

"I mean I wasn't able to obtain the appointment, Mr.

Why not?
"He declined it"
You mean he refused to see me?"
Yes sir that is what I mean"
"He *wouldn t* see me?"
"No sir he wouldn t"
"Did you speak to him in person?"
"No sir I spoke to his secretary
"What did he tell you? Just what did he say? The young man hesitated and looked more unhappy What did he say?
"He said that Senor d Anconia said that you bore him, Mr Taggart

* *

The proposal which they passed was known as the "Anti-dog-eat dog Rule When they voted for it the members of the National Alliance of Railroads sat in a large hall in the deepening twilight of a late autumn evening and did not look at one another

The National Alliance of Railroads was an organization formed it was claimed to protect the welfare of the railroad industry This was to be achieved by developing methods of co operation for a common purpose this was to be achieved by the pledge of every member to subordinate his own interests to those of the industry as a whole the interests of the industry as a whole were to be determined by a majority vote and every member was committed to abide by any decision the majority chose to make

"Members of the same profession or of the same industry should stick together" the organizers of the Alliance had said "We all have the same problems the same interests the same enemies We waste our energy fighting one another instead of presenting a common front to the world We can all grow and prosper together if we pool our efforts" "Against whom is this Alliance being organ ized? a skeptic had asked The answer had been "Why its not against anybody But if you want to put it that way why its against shippers or supply manufacturers or anyone who might try to take advantage of us Against whom is any union organized? Thats what I wonder about the skeptic had said

When the Anti-dog-eat dog Rule was offered to the vote of the full membership of the National Alliance of Railroads at its annual meeting, it was the first mention of this Rule in public But all the members had heard of it It had been discussed privately for a long time and more insistently in the last few months The men who sat in the large hall of the meeting were the presidents of the railroads They did not like the Anti-dog-eat-dog Rule they had hoped it would never be brought up But when it was brought up they voted for it

No railroad was mentioned by name in the speeches that preceded the voting The speeches dealt only with the publ c welfare It was said that while the public welfare was threatened by shortages of transportation, railroads were destroying one another through vicious competition on "the brutal policy of dog-eat-dog" While there existed blighted areas where rail service had been discon

tinued, there existed at the same time large regions where two or more railroads were competing for a traffic barely sufficient for one. It was said that there were great opportunities for younger railroads in the blighted areas While it was true that such areas offered little economic incentive at present, a public spirited rail road, it was said, would undertake to provide transportation for the struggling inhabitants, since the prime purpose of a railroad was public service, not profit

Then it was said that large, established railroad systems were essential to the public welfare, and that the collapse of one of them would be a national catastrophe and that if one such system had happened to sustain a crushing loss in a public spirited attempt to contribute to international good will, it was entitled to public support to help it survive the blow

No railroad was mentioned by name But when the chairman of the meeting raised his hand, as a solemn signal that they were about to vote everybody looked at Dan Conway, president of the Phoenix Durango

There were only five dissenters who voted against it. Yet when the chairman announced that the measure had passed, there was no cheering no sounds of approval, no movement nothing but a heavy silence. To the last minute every one of them had hoped that someone would save them from it

The Anti-dog-eat-dog Rule was described as a measure of voluntary self regulation" intended the better to enforce the laws long since passed by the country's Legislature The Rule provided that the members of the National Alliance of Railroads were forbidden to engage in practices defined as destructive com petition", that in regions declared to be restricted no more than one railroad would be permitted to operate that in such regions seniority belonged to the oldest railroad now operating there and that the newcomers, who had encroached unfairly upon its ter ritory would suspend operations within nine months after being so ordered that the Executive Board of the National Alliance of Railroads was empowered to decide, at its sole discretion, which regions were to be restricted

When the meeting adjourned, the men hastened to leave There were no private discussions, no friendly loitering The great hall became deserted in an unusually short time Nobody spoke to or looked at Dan Conway

In the lobby of the building, James Taggart met Orren Boyle They had made no appointment to meet but Taggart saw a bulky figure outlined against a marble wall and knew who it was before he saw the face T[illegible] said, his smile less soothin[illegible] urn now, Jimmy" "You di[illegible] ou?" said Taggart sullenly "[illegible]

Dan Conway sat alone among rows of empty seats He was still there when the charwoman came to clean the hall When she hailed him, he rose obediently and shuffled to the door Passing her in the aisle, he fumbled in his pocket and handed her a five

dollar bill, silently, meekly, not looking at her face He did not seem to know what he was doing, he acted as if he thought that he was in some place where generosity demanded that he give a tip before leaving

Dagny was still at her desk when the door of her office flew open and James Taggart rushed in It was the first time he had ever entered in such manner His face looked feverish.

She had not seen him since the nationalization of the San Sebastian Line He had not sought to discuss it with her, and she had said nothing about it She had been proved right so eloquently, she had thought, that comments were unnecessary A feeling which was part courtesy, part mercy had stopped her from stating to him the conclusion to be drawn from the events In all reason and justice there was but one conclusion he could draw She had heard about his speech to the Board of Directors She had shrugged contemptuously amused, if it served his purpose, whatever that was to appropriate her achievements, then, for his own advantage, if for no other reason, he would leave her free to achieve, from now on

"So you think you're the only one who's doing anything for this railroad?'

She looked at him, bewildered His voice was shrill, he stood in front of her desk, tense with excitement.

"So you think that I ve ruined the company, don't you?" he yelled "And now you re the only one who can save us? Think I have no way to make up for the Mexican loss?"

She asked slowly, 'What do you want?"

"I want to tell you some news Do you remember the Anti-dog eat-dog proposal of the Railroad Alliance that I told you about months ago? You didn t like the idea You didn t like it at all"

"I remember What about it?"

"It has been passed"

"What has been passed?"

"The Anti-dog eat dog Rule Just a few minutes ago At the meeting Nine months from now, there s not going to be any Phoenix Durango Railroad in Colorado!"

A glass ashtray crashed to the floor off the desk, as she leaped to her feet.

"You rotten bastards!"

[illegible]

curiosity

They stood facing each other He looked as if, for the first time [illegible]

James Taggart and in that which made him smile, was a secret she had never suspected, and it was crucially important that she learn to understand it. But the thought flashed and vanished.

She whirled to the door of a closet and seized her coat.

"Where are you going?" Taggart's voice had dropped, it sounded disappointed and faintly worried.

She did not answer. She rushed out of the office.

* *

"Dan, you have to fight them. I'll help you. I'll fight for you with everything I've got."

[illegible]

ad met a few times in Colorado.

"No," he said, "it's no use."

"Do you mean because of that Alliance agreement that you gned? It won't hold. This is plain expropriation. No court will phold it. And if Jim tries to hide behind the usual looters' slogan f 'public welfare,' I'll go on the stand and swear that Taggart ranscontinental can't handle the whole traffic of Colorado. And any court rules against you, you can appeal and keep on appealg for the next ten years."

"Yes," he said, "I could . . . I'm not sure I'd win, but I could y and I could hang onto the railroad for a few years longer, ut . . . No, it's not the legal points that I'm thinking about, one ay or the other. It's not that."

"What, then?"

"I don't want to fight it, Dagny."

She looked at him incredulously It was the one sentence which, he felt sure, he had never uttered before, a man could not reverse imself so late in life.

Dan Conway was approaching fifty He had the square, stolid, tubborn face of a tough freight engineer, rather than a company resident, the face of a fighter, with a young, tanned skin and raying hair. He had taken over a shaky little railroad in Arizona, road whose net revenue was less than that of a successful rocery store, and he had built it into the best railroad of the outhwest He spoke little, seldom read books, had never gone to ollege. The whole sphere of human endeavors, with one exception, eft him blankly indifferent, he had no touch of that which people alled culture But he knew railroads.

"Why don't you want to fight?"

"Because they had the right to do it"

"Dan," she asked, "have you lost your mind?"

"I've never gone back on my word in my life," he said I don't care what the courts [illegible] I promised to obey the have to obey."

"Did you expect the majority to do this to you?"

"No" There was a kind of faint convulsion in the stolid face He spoke softly, not looking at her, the helpless astonishment still raw within him "No, I didn't expect it I heard them talking about it for over a year, but I didn't believe it. Even when they were voting, I didn't believe it"

"What did you expect?"

"I thought They said all of us were to stand for the common good I thought what I had done down there in Colorado was good. Good for everybody"

"Oh, you damn fool! Don't you see that that's what you're being punished for—because it was good?"

He shook his head "I don't understand it," he said "But I see no way out"

'Did you promise them to agree to destroy yourself?"

"There doesn't seem to be any choice for any of us."

"What do you mean?"

"Dagny, the whole world's in a terrible state right now. I don't know what's wrong with it, but something's very wrong Men have to get together and find a way out But who's to decide which way to take, unless it's the majority? I guess that's the only fair method of deciding, I don't see any other I suppose somebody's got to be sacrificed If it turned out to be me, I have no right to complain. The right's on their side Men have to get together"

She made an effort to speak calmly, she was trembling with anger "If that's the price of getting together, then I'll be damned if I want to live on the same earth with any human beings! If the rest of them can survive only by destroying us, then why should we wish them to survive? Nothing can make self-immolation proper Nothing can give them the right to turn men into sacrificial animals Nothing can make it moral to destroy the best. One can't be punished for being good One can't be penalized for ability If that is right, then we'd better start slaughtering one another, because there isn't any right at all in the world!"

He did not answer He looked at her helplessly.

"If it's that kind of world, how can we live in it?" she asked.

"I don't know . ." he whispered

"Dan, do you really think it's right? In all truth, deep down, do you think it's right?"

He closed his eyes "No," he said Then he looked at her and she saw a look of torture for the first time "That's what I've *been sittin* here trying to understand I know that I ought to think it's righ —but I can't It's as if my tongue wouldn't turn to *say it* I kee seeing every tie of the track down there, every signal light, ever bridge, every night that I *spent when . . .*" His head dropped dow on his arms "Oh God it's so damn *unjust!*"

"Dan," she said through her teeth, "fight it"

He raised his head His eyes were empty. "No," he said. "I would be wrong I'm just selfish"

"Oh, damn that rotten tripe! You know better than that!"

"I don't know . . ." His voice was very tired. "I've been sittin

re, trying to think about it . . . I don't know what is right any
ore . " He added, "I don't think I care "

She knew suddenly that all further words were useless and that an Conway would never be a man of action again She did not iow what made her certain of it She said, wondering, "You've ver given up in the face of a battle before "

"No, I guess I haven't. . . " He spoke with a quiet, indifferent tonishment. "I've fought storms and floods and rock slides and il fissure . . . I knew how to do it, and I liked doing it. . . it this kind of battle—it's one I can t fight."

"Why?"

"I don't know Who knows why the world is what it is? Oh, ho is John Galt?"

She winced "Then what are you going to do?"

"I dont know . . ."

"I mean—" She stopped.

He knew what she meant. "Oh, there's always something to . ." He spoke without conviction. "I guess it s only Colorado id New Mexico that they re going to declare restricted I'll still ive the line in Arizona to run " He added, "As it was twenty ears ago . . Well, it will keep me busy I'm getting tired, Dagny didn't take time to notice it, but I guess I am "

She could say nothing.

"I'm not going to build a line through one of their blighted reas," he said in the same indifferent voice "That's what they tried hand me for a consolation prize, but I think it's just talk You in't build a railroad where there s nothing for hundreds of miles ut a couple of farmers who're not growing enough to feed themlves You can't build a road and make it pay If you don't make pay, who s going to? It doesn t make sense to me They just idn't know what they were saying "

"Oh, to hell with their blighted areas! It's you I'm thinking about." he had to name it. "What will you do with yourself?"

"I don't know . . . Well, there s a lot of things I haven't had me to do Fishing, for instance I've always liked fishing. Maybe ll start reading books, always meant to Guess I'll take it easy ow Guess I'll go fishing There s some nice places down in Arizona, here it s peaceful and quiet and you don't have to see a human being or miles . " He glanced up at her and added, "Forget it. Why hould you worry about me?"

"It s not about you, it's . . Dan," she said suddenly, "I hope ou know it's not for your sake that I wanted to help you fight."

He smiled it was a faint, friendly smile "I know," he said.

"It s not out of pity or charity or any ugly reason like that. Look, intended to give you the battle of your life, down there in Colorado I intended to [illegible] and squeeze you to the
[illegible] "You would have made
[illegible] ary I thought there was
nough room there for both of us."

"Yes," he said. "There was."

"Still if I found that there wasn't, I would have fought you, and if I could make my road better than yours, I'd have broken you and not given a damn about what happened to you. But this . . . Dan, I don't think I want to look at our Rio Norte Line now. I . . . Oh God, Dan, I don't want to be a looter!"

He looked at her silently for a moment. It was an odd look, as if from a great distance He said softly, 'You should have been born about a hundred years earlier, kid Then you would have had a chance"

"To hell with that I intend to make my own chance."

"That's what I intended at your age"

"You succeeded"

"Have I?"

She sat still, suddenly unable to move.

He sat up straight and said sharply, almost as if he were issuing orders, "You'd better look at that Rio Norte Line of yours, and you'd better do it fast Get it ready before I move out, because if you don't, that will be the end of Ellis Wyatt and all the rest of them down there, and they're the best people left in the country. You can't let that happen. It's all on your shoulders now. It would be no use trying to explain to your brother that it's going to be much tougher for you down there without me to compete with. But you and I know it. So go to it Whatever you do, you won't be a looter No looter could run a railroad in that part of the country and last at it. Whatever you make down there, you will have earned it. Lice like your brother don't count, anyway. It's up to you now"

[illegible] had defeated

[illegible]

that the smile held sadness and pity

'You'd better not feel sorry for me," he said "I think, of the two of us, it's you who have the harder time ahead And I think you're going to get it worse than I did"

* *

She had telephoned the mills and made an appointment to see Hank Rearden that afternoon. She had just hung up the receiver and was bending over the maps of the Rio Norte Line spread on her desk, when the door opened. Dagny looked up, startled, she did [illegible]

[illegible]

quality of self-control that seemed almost arrogant He had da[illegible] eyes, disheveled hair, and his clothes were expensive, but worn as if he did not care or notice what he wore

"Ellis Wyatt," he said in self introduction

She leaped to her feet, involuntarily. She understood why nobody had or could have stopped him in the outer office.

"Sit down, Mr Wyatt," she said, smiling

"It won t be necessary" He did not smile "I don't hold long conferences"

Slowly, taking her time by conscious intention, she sat down and leaned back, looking at him.

"Well?" she asked.

"I came to see you because I understand you're the only one who s got any brains in this rotten outfit."

"What can I do for you?"

"You can listen to an ultimatum" He spoke distinctly, giving unusual clarity to every syllable "I expect Taggart Transcon ental, nine months from now, to run trains in Colorado as my siness requires them to be run If the snide stunt you people rpetrated on the Phoenix Durango was done for the purpose of ring yourself from the necessity of effort, this is to give you tice that you will not get away with it I made no demands on u when you could not give me the kind of service I needed I und someone who could Now you wish to force me to deal with u You expect to dictate terms by leaving me no choice You pect me to hold my business down to the level of your incompetence is is to tell you that you have miscalculated"

She said slowly, with effort, "Shall I tell you what I intend to do out our service in Colorado?"

"No I have no interest in discussions and intentions I expect insportation. What you do to furnish it and how you do it, is ur problem, not mine I am merely giving you a warning Those ho wish to deal with me, must do so on my terms or not at all do not make terms with incompetence If you expect to earn oney by carrying the oil I produce you must be as good at your siness as I am at mine I wish this to be understood."

She said quietly, "I understand"

"I shan't waste time proving to you why you'd better take my ltimatum seriously If you have the intelligence to keep this cor ipt organization functioning at all you have the intelligence to dge this for yourself We both know that if Taggart Transcon nental runs trains in Colorado the way it did five years ago, it will un me I know that that is what you people intend to do You spect to feed off me while you can and to find another carcass pick dry after you have finished mine That is the policy of most f mankind today So here is my ultimatum it is now in your ower to destroy me I may have to go, but if I go, I'll make sure at I take all the rest of you along with me"

Somewhere within her, under the numbness that held her still receive the lashing she felt a small point of pain, hot like the ain of scalding She wanted to tell him of the years she had spent ooking for men such as he to work with, she wanted to tell him hat his enemies were hers, that she was fighting the same battle, he wanted to cry to him I m not one of them! But she knew that he could not do it She bore the responsibility for Taggart T ontinental and for everything done in its name she had o justify herself now.

S tting straight her glance as steady and open as his she answered evenly You will get the transportation you need Mr Wyatt."

his voice less sharp
All right Thank you Good day
She inclined her head He bowed and left the office

* *

"That s the story Hank I had worked out an almost impossible schedule to complete the Rio Norte Line in twelve months. Now I ll have to do it in nine You were to give us the rail over a period of one year Can you give it to us within nine months? If there s any human way to do it do it If not I ll have to find some other means to finish it."

Rearden sat behind his desk His cold blue eyes made two horizontal cuts across the gaunt planes of his face they remained horizontal impassively half-closed he said evenly, without em phasis

"I ll do it"

Dagny leaned back in her chair The short sentence was a shock It was not merely relief it was the sudden realization that nothin else was necessary to guarantee that it would be done she needec no proofs no questions no explanations a complex problem coul rest safely on three syllables pronounced by a man who knew wha he was saying

"Don t show that you re relieved His voice was mocking "N too obviously" His narrowed eyes were watching her with an u revealing smile "I might think that I hold Taggart Transcontinent in my power"

"You know that anyway"

"I do And I intend to make you pay for it"

"I expect to How much?

"Twenty dollars extra per ton on the balance of the order de livered after today"

"Pretty steep Hank Is that the best price you can give me?

"No But that s the one I m going to get I could ask twice that and you d pay it."

"Yes I would And you could But you won t"

"Why won't I?"

"Because you need to have the Rio Norte Line built It s your first showcase for Rearden Metal"

He chuckled That s right I like to deal with somebody who has no illusions about getting favors"

"Do you know what made me feel relieved when you decided to take advantage of it?"

"What?

"That I was dealing for once with somebody who doesn t pre tend to give favors"

His smile had a discernible quality now it was enjoyment "Yo

always play it open, don't you?" he asked.

"I've never noticed you doing otherwise"

"I thought I was the only one who could afford to"

"I'm not broke, in that sense, Hank'

"I think I'm going to break you some day—in that sense"

"Why?"

"I've always wanted to"

"Don't you have enough cowards around you?"

"That's why I'd enjoy trying it—because you're the only exception. So you think it's right that I should squeeze every penny of rofit I can, out of your emergency?'

"Certainly I'm not a fool. I don't think you're in business for my onvenience"

"Don't you wish I were?"

"I'm not a moocher, Hank"

"Aren't you going to find it hard to pay?"

"That's my problem, not yours I want that rail"

"At twenty dollars extra per ton?"

"Okay, Hank"

"Fine. You'll get the rail I may get my exorbitant profit—or [illegible] h before I collect"

[illegible] dont get that line built in nine [illegible] *will* crash"

When he did not smile, his face looked inanimate only his eyes emained alive, active with a cold, brilliant clarity of perception But what he was made to feel by the things he perceived no one would be permitted to know, she thought, perhaps not even himself

"They've done their best to make it harder for you haven't they?" he said.

"Yes I was counting on Colorado to save the Taggart system. Now it's up to me to save Colorado Nine months from now, Dan Conway will close his road. If mine isn't ready, it won't be any use finishing it You can't leave those men without transportation for a single day, let alone a week or a month At the rate they've been growing, you can't stop them dead and then expect them to continue It's like slamming brakes on an engine going two hundred miles an hour"

"I know"

"I can run a good railroad I can't run it across a continent of sharecroppers who're not good enough to grow turnips successfully I've got to have men like Ellis Wyatt to produce something to fill the trains I run. So I've got to give him a train and a track nine months from now, if I have to blast all the rest of us into hell to do it!"

He smiled amused. "You feel very strongly about it, don't you?"

"Don't *you*?"

He would not answer, but merely held the smile

"Aren't you concerned about it?" she asked almost

"No."

"Then you don't realize what it means?"

"I realize that I'm going to get the rail rolled and you're going to get the track laid in nine months"

She smiled, relaxing, wearily and a little guiltily "Yes I know we will I know it's useless—getting angry at people like Jim and his friends We haven't any time for it. First, I have to undo what they've done Then afterwards"—she stopped, wondering, shook her head and shrugged—"afterwards, they won't matter"

"That's right They won't. When I heard about that Anti-dog-eat-dog business it made me sick But don't worry about the goddamn bastards The two words sounded shockingly violent, because his face and voice remained calm 'You and I will always be there to save the country from the consequences of their actions" He got up, he said pacing the ... to be stopped. You'll pull it through ... All that lunacy is temp... to defeat itself You a... for a while that's all"

She watched his tall figure moving across the office The office suited him it contained nothing but the few pieces of furniture he needed all of them harshly simplified down to their essential purpose all of them exorbitantly expensive in the quality of materials and the skill of design The room looked like a motor—a motor held within the glass case of broad windows But she noticed one astonishing detail a vase of jade that stood on top of a filing cabinet The vase was a solid, dark green stone carved into plain ...

in the country You're not sure that I'm concerned about it? The state's becoming one of my best customers, as you ought to know if you take time to read the reports on your freight traffic"

"I know I read them."

"I've been thinking of building a plant there in a few years To save them your transportation charges" He glanced at her. "You'll lose an awful lot of steel freight if I do"

"Go ahead I'll be satisfied with carrying your supplies, and the groceries for your workers, and the freight of the factories that will follow you there—and perhaps I won't have time to notice that I've lost your steel . . . What are you laughing at?"

"It's wonderful"

"What?"

... most

"—tries his best to harm my business? Because your brother Jim is a fool"

"He is But it's more than that. There's something worse than stupidity about it"

"Don't waste time trying to figure him out. Let him spit He s no danger to anyone People like Jim Taggart just clutter up the world"

"I suppose so"

"Incidentally, what would you have done if I'd said I couldn't deliver your rails sooner?"

"I would have torn up sidings or closed some branch line any ... the Rio Norte

... rt Trans-

... old sid-

ings Not so long as I m in business"

She thought suddenly that she was wrong about his lack of motion the hidden undertone of his manner was enjoyment She realized that she had always felt a sense of light hearted relaxation in his presence and known that he shared it He was the only man she knew to whom she could speak without strain or effort This, she thought, was a mind she respected an adversary worth matching Yet there had always been an odd sense of distance between them, the sense of a closed door there was an impersonal quality in his manner, something within him that could not be reached.

He had stopped at the window He stood for a moment looking at. "Do you know that the first load of rail is being delivered to you today?" he asked.

"Of course I know it."

"Come here"

She approached him. He pointed silently Far in the distance, beyond the mill structures, she saw a string of gondolas waiting on a siding The bridge of an overhead crane cut the sky above them The crane was moving Its huge magnet held a load of rails glued to a disk by the sole power of contact There was no trace of sun in the gray spread of clouds, yet the rails glistened as if the metal caught light out of space The metal was a greenish-blue The great chain stopped over a car, descended, jerked in a brief spasm and left the rails in the car The crane moved back in majestic indifference, it looked like the giant drawing of a geometrical theorem moving above the men and the earth

They stood at the window, watching silently intently She did not speak, until another load of green blue metal came moving across the sky Then the first words she said were not about rail, track or an order completed on time. She said, as if greeting a new phenomenon of nature

"Rearden Metal . ."

He noticed that but said nothing He glanced at her, then turned back to the window

"Hank, this is great."

"Yes."

He said it simply openly There was no flattered pleasure force, and no modesty This, she knew was a tribute to greatest one person could pay another the tribute of acknowledge one s ... knowing that it is

She said, "When I think of what that metal can do, what it will make possible . . . Hank, this is the most important thing happening in the world today, and none of them know it."

"We know it"

They did not look at each other. They stood watching the train. On the front of the locomotive in the distance, she could distinguish the letters TT She could distinguish the rails of the [illegible] industrial siding of the Taggart system

"As soon as I can find a plant able to do it," she said, "I'm going to order Diesels made of Rearden Metal."

"You'll need them How fast do you run your trains on the Rio Norte track?"

"Now? We're lucky if we manage to make twenty miles an hour."

He pointed at the cars "When that rail is laid, you'll be able to run trains at [illegible]

[illegible] what that metal will [illegible] motors, and what sort of thing one can design now"

"Have you thought of what it will do for chicken wire? Just plain chicken wire fences, made of Rearden Metal, that will cost a few pennies a mile and last two hundred years. And kitchenware that will be bought at the dime store and passed on from generation to generation And ocean liners that one won't be able to dent with a torpedo."

"Did I tell you that I'm having tests made of communication wire of Rearden Metal?"

"I'm making so many tests that I'll never get through showing people what can be done with it and how to do it."

They spoke of the metal and of the possibilities which they could not exhaust. It was as if they were standing on a mountain top, seeing a limitless plain below and roads open in all directions. But they merely spoke of mathematical figures, of weights, pressures, resistances, costs

She had forgotten her brother and his National Alliance. She had forgotten every problem, person and event behind her; they had always been clouded in her sight, to be hurried past, to be brushed aside, never final, never quite real. This was reality, she thought, this sense of clear outlines, of purpose, of lightness, of hope This was the way she had expected to live—she had wanted to spend no hour and take no action that would mean less than this

She looked at him in the exact moment when he turned to look at her They stood very close to each other. She saw, in his eyes, that he felt as she did. If joy is the aim and the core of existence, she thought, and if that which has the power to give one joy is always guarded as one's deepest secret, then they had seen each other naked in that moment.

He made a step back and said in a strange tone of dispassionate wonder, "We're a couple of blackguards, aren't we?"

"Why?"

"We haven't any spiritual goals or qualities All we're after is material things That's all we care for"

She looked at him, unable to understand. But he was looking past her, straight ahead, *at the crane in the distance. She wished he* [illegible]

there had been no feeling in his voice, neither plea nor shame He [illegible]

[illegible] and it's we who'll pull it through."

Chapter V THE CLIMAX OF THE D'ANCONIAS

The newspaper was the first thing she noticed It was clutched tightly in Eddie's hand, as he entered her office She glanced up at his face it was tense and bewildered.

"Dagny, are you very busy?"

"Why?"

"I know that you don't like to talk about him But there's something here I think you ought to see"

She extended her hand silently for the newspaper

The story on the front page announced that upon taking over the San Seba[illegible]

[illegible] expected to exist there, and there were no indications that could have permitted anyone to be deluded. The government of the People's State of Mexico was holding emergency sessions about their discovery, in an uproar of indignation, they felt that they had been cheated

Watching her, Eddie knew that Dagny sat looking at the newspaper long after she had finished reading *He knew that he had been right to feel a hint of fear, even though he could not tell what frightened him about that story*

He waited. She raised her head She did not look at him. Her eyes were fixed, intent in concentration, as if trying to [illegible] something at a great distance.

He said his voice low Francisco is not a fool Whatever else he may be no matter what depravity he s sunk to—and I ve given up trying to figure out why—he is not a fool He couldn t have made a mistake of this kind It is not possible I don t understand it."

I m beginning to

She sat up jolted upright by a sudden movement that ran through her body like a shudder She said

Phone him at the Wayne Falkland and tell the bastard that I want to see him"

"Dagny" he said sadly, reproachfully, 'it s Frisco d Anconia."

"It was

* *

She walked through the early twilight of the city streets to the Wayne Falkland Hotel He says any time you wish,' Eddie had told her *The first lights appeared in a few windows high* under the clouds The skyscrapers looked like abandoned lighthouses sending feeble dying signals out into an empty sea where no ships moved any longer A few snowflakes came down, past the dark windows of empty stores to melt in the mud of the sidewalks A string of

the Taggart estate That was the way she always ran when Eddie yelled Its Frisco d Anconia! and they both flew down the hill to the car approaching on the road below

He was the only guest whose arrival was an event in their child hood, their biggest event The running to meet him had become part of a contest among the three of them There was a birch tree on the hillside halfway between the road and the house Dagny and Eddie tried to get past the tree before Francisco could race up the hill to meet them On all the many days of his arrivals in all the many summers they never reached the birch tree, Francisco reached it first and stopped them when he was way past it Francisco always won as he always won everything

His parents were old friends of the Taggart family He was an only son and he was being brought up all over the world, hi father it was said wanted him to consider the world as his future domain Dagny and Eddie could never be certain of where he would spend his winter, but once a year, every summer, a stern South American tutor brought him for a month to the Taggart estate

Francisco found it natural that the Taggart children should be chosen as his companions they were the crown heirs of Taggar Transcontinental as he was of d Anconia Copper "We are th only aristocracy left in the world—the aristocracy of money," h said to Dagny once, when he was fourteen. "It s the only

you're some kind of very high nobility, aren't you?" He answered, "Not yet. The reason my family has lasted for such a long time is that none of us has ever been permitted to think he is born a d'Anconia. We are expected to become one." He pronounced his name as if he wished his listeners to be struck in the face and knighted by the sound of it.

Sebastián d'Anconia, his ancestor, had left Spain many centuries ago at a time when Spain was the most powerful country on earth and his was one of Spain's proudest figures. He left, because the lord of the Inquisition did not approve of his manner of thinking and suggested, at a court banquet, that he change it. Sebastián d'Anconia threw the contents of his wine glass at the face of the lord of the Inquisition, and escaped before he could be seized. He left behind him his fortune, his estate, his marble palace and the girl he loved—and he sailed to a new world.

His [illegible] help of a few stray derelicts deserters from the armies of his countrymen, escaped convicts, starving Indians

Fifteen years after he left Spain, Sebastián d'Anconia sent for the girl he loved, she had waited for him. When she arrived, she found the silver coat-of-arms above the entrance of a marble [illegible] pits [illegible] the [illegible] had [illegible]

"My ancestors and yours," Francisco told Dagny, "would have liked each other"

Through the years of her childhood, Dagny lived in the future —in the world she expected to find, where she would not have to feel contempt or boredom. But for one month each year, she was free. For one month, she could live in the present. When she raced down the hill to meet Francisco d'Anconia, it was a release from prison.

"Hi, Slug!"

"Hi, Frisco!"

They had both resented the nicknames, at first. She had asked him angrily "What do you think you mean?" He had answered, "In case you don't know it, 'Slug' means a great fire in a locomotive firebox." "Where did you pick that up?" "From the gentlemen along the Taggart iron." He spoke five languages, and he spoke English without a trace of accent, a precise, cultured English deliberately mixed with slang. She had retaliated by calling him Frisco He had laughed, amused and annoyed. "If you barbarians had to degrade the name of a great city of yours, you could at least refrain from doing it to me." But they had grown to like the nicknames.

It had started in the days of their second summer together, when he was twelve years old and she was ten. That summer,

Francisco began vanishing every morning for some purpose nobody could discover He went off on his bicycle before dawn, and returned in time to appear at the white and crystal table set for lunch on the terrace *his manner courteously punctual* and a little too innocent He laughed refusing to answer, when Dagny and Eddie questioned him They tried to follow him once, through the cold, pre morning darkness, but they gave it up, no one could track him when he did not want to be tracked

After a while, Mrs Taggart began to worry and decided to investigate She never learned how he had managed to by pass all the child labor laws but she found Francisco working—by an unofficial deal with the dispatcher—as a call boy for Taggart Transcontinental, at a division point ten miles away The dispatcher was stupefied by her personal visit he had no idea that his call boy was a house guest of the Taggarts The boy was known to the local railroad crews as Frankie, and Mrs Taggart preferred not to enlighten them about his full name She merely explained that he was working without his parents' permission and had to quit at once The dispatcher was sorry to lose him, Frankie, he said, was the best call boy they had ever had 'I'd sure like to keep him on Maybe we could make a deal with his parents?' he suggested "I'm afraid not, said Mrs Taggart faintly

"Francisco," she asked when she brought him home, "wha would your father say about this, if he knew?"

"My father would ask whether I was good at the job or not That s all he'd want to know"

"Come now, I'm serious"

Francisco was looking at her politely, his courteous manner suggesting centuries of breeding and drawing rooms, but something in his eyes made her feel uncertain about the politeness "Last winter," he answered, "I shipped out as a cabin boy on a cargo steamer tha carried d'Anconia copper My father looked for me for thre months, but thats all he asked me when I came back"

"So that's how you spend your winters?" said Jim Taggar Jim's smile had a touch of triumph, the triumph of finding caus to feel contempt

"That was last winter," Francisco answered pleasantly, with n

[illegible]

tion [illegible] of mockery but it was not the mockery of malice—it wa *the laughter of a salute*

"To learn what it s like, Slug," he answered, "and to tell yo that I ve had a job with Taggart Transcontinental before you did

Dagny and Eddie spent their winters trying to master some ne skill, in order to astonish Francisco and beat him, for once The never succeeded When they showed him how to hit a ball with bat, a game he had never played before, he watched them for few minutes, then said, "I think I get the idea. Let me try" He too

bat and sent the ball flying over a line of oak trees far at end of the field.

When Jim was given a motorboat for his birthday they all stood the river landing, watching the lesson, while an instructor showed how to run it. None of them had ever driven a motorboat be e. The sparkling white craft, shaped like a bullet, kept stagg-r

[illegible]

when the boat came back and its two occupants stepped out, ancisco slipped behind the wheel "Wait a moment," he said to instructor, who remained on the landing "Let me take a look this." Then, before the instructor had time to move the boat ot out to the middle of the river, as if fired from a gun It was eaking away before they grasped what they were seeing. As it nt shrinking into the distance and sunlight, Dagny's picture of it s three straight lines its wake, the long shriek of its motor d the aim of the driver at its wheel.

She noticed the strange expression of her father's face as he looked the vanishing speedboat. He said nothing he just stood looking remembered that she had seen him look that way once before was when he inspected a complex system of pulleys which Fran sco, aged twelve, had erected to make an elevator to the top

[illegible]

st something I figured out." She did not know that what her ther held on the crumpled sheets of paper was the crude version a differential equation.

The heirs of Sebastián d Anconia had been an unbroken line of st sons, who knew how to bear his name. It was a tradition of e family that the man to disgrace them would be the heir who ied, leaving the d'Anconia fortune no greater than he had re ived it. Throughout the generations, that disgrace had not come. Argentinian legend said that the hand of a d Anconia had the iraculous power of the saints—only it was not the power to al but the power to produce

The d'Anconia heirs had been men of unusual ability but none f them could match what Francisco d Anconia promised to become t was as if the centuries had sifted the family's qualities through

can do it" What he meant by doing was doing superlatively

No matter what discipline was required of him by his father's exacting plan for his education, no matter what subject he was ordered to study, Francisco mastered it with effortless amusement. His father adored him, but concealed it carefully, as he concealed the pride of knowing that he was bringing up the most brilliant phenomenon of a brilliant family line Francisco, it was said, was to be the climax of the d'Anconias

I don t know what sort of motto the d'Anconias have on their family crest, Mrs Taggart said once, "but I'm sure that Francisco will change it to 'What for?'" It was the first question he asked about any activity proposed to him—and nothing would make him act if he found no valid answer He flew through the days of his summer month like a rocket, but if one stopped him in mid flight, he could always name the purpose of his every random moment. Two things were impossible to him to stand still or to move aimlessly

"Let's find out" was the motive he gave to Dagny and Eddie for anything he undertook, or "Let's make it." These were his only forms of enjoyment

"I can do it,' he said, when he was building his elevator, clinging to the side of a cliff, driving metal wedges into rock, his arms moving with an expert s rhythm, drops of blood slipping, unnoticed, from under a bandage on his wrist. 'No, we can't take turns, Eddie, you're not big enough yet to handle a hammer Just cart the weeds off and keep the way clear for me, I'll do the rest. . What blood? Oh, that s nothing, just a cut I got yesterday Dagny, run to the house and bring me a clean bandage"

Jim watched them They left him alone, but they often saw him standing in the distance, watching Francisco with a peculiar kind of intensity

He seldom spoke in Francisco s presence But he would corner Dagny and he would smile derisively, saying, "All those airs you put on pretending that you re an iron woman with a mind of her own! You're a spineless dishrag that s all you are It's disgusting

can twist

The way

you shine

He neve

entered contests He could have ruled the junior country club H never came within sight of their clubhouse, ignoring their eage attempts to enroll the most famous heir in the world Dagny and Eddie were his only friends They could not tell whether the owned him or were owned by him completely, it made no differ ence either concept made them happy

The three of them

own kin

friend

carcass

Francisc

libraries, absorbing the culture of the world" "What do you ık I'm doing?" asked Francisco.

There were no factories in the neighborhood, but Francisco ght Dagny and Eddie to steal rides on Taggart trains to distant ns where they climbed fences into mill yards or hung on dow sills, watching machinery as other children watched vies. "When I run Taggart Transcontinental . . ." Dagny would at times "When I run d'Anconia Copper . . ." said Francisco They never had to explain the rest to each other, they w each other's goal and motive

Railroad conductors caught them, once in a while. Then a [illegible]

the Taggart station, "you've been just about everywhere in the rld. What's the most important thing on earth?" "This," answered ancisco, pointing to the emblem TT on the front of an engine. added, "I wish I could have met Nat Taggart"

He noticed Dagny's glance at him He said nothing else. But nutes later, when they went on through the woods, down a narw path of damp earth, ferns and sunlight, he said, "Dagny, I'll ways bow to a coat-of arms I'll always worship the symbols of bility Am I not supposed to be an aristocrat? Only I don't [illegible]

When I run d'Anconia Copper . . ." "I'm studying mining and ineralogy, because I must be ready for the time when I run Anconia Copper . . " "I'm studying electrical engineering beuse power companies are the best customers of d'Anconia Copper " "I'm going to study philosophy, because I'll need it to protect Anconia Copper . . ."

"Don't you ever think of anything but d'Anconia Copper?" Jim ked him once

"No."

"It seems to me that there are other things in the world."

"Let others think about them"

"Isn't that a very selfish attitude?"

"*It is*"

"What are you after?"

"Money"

"Don't you have enough?"

"In his lifetime, every one of my ancestors raised the production of d'Anconia Copper by about ten per cent. I intend to raise it y one hundred."

"*What for?*" Jim asked, in sarcastic imitation of Francisco's voice.

"When I die, I hope to go to heaven—whatever the hell that is—and I want to be able to afford the price of admission"

"Virtue is the price of admission," Jim said haughtily

"That's what I mean, James So I want to be prepared to clai the greatest virtue of all—that I was a man who made money"

"Any grafter can make money"

'James you ought to discover some day that words have an exact meaning

Francisco smiled it was a smile of radiant mockery Watching them Dagny thought suddenly of the difference between Francisco and her brother Jim Both of them smiled derisively But Francisco seemed to laugh at things because he saw something much greater Jim laughed as if he wanted to let nothing remain great

She noticed the particular quality of Francisco's smile again, one night when she sat with him and Eddie at a bonfire they had built in the woods The glow of the fire enclosed them within a fence of broken moving strips that held pieces of tree trunks branches and distant stars She felt as if there were nothing beyond that fence nothing but black emptiness with the hint of some breath stopping frightening promise like the future But the future, she thought, would be like Francisco's smile, *there* was the key to it, the advance warning of its nature—in his face in th firelight under the pine branches—and suddenly she felt an unbear able happiness unbearable because it was too full and she had n way to express it She glanced at Eddie He was looking at Fran cisco In some quiet way of his own, Eddie felt as she did

"Why do you like Francisco? she asked him weeks later, whe Francisco was gone

Eddie looked astonished it had never occurred to him that th feeling could be questioned He said "He makes me feel safe"

She said *He* makes me expect excitement and danger"

Francisco was sixteen, next summer, the day when she stoo alone with him on the summit of a cliff by the river, their sho and shirts torn in their climb to the top They stood looking dov the Hudson they had heard that on clear days one could see N York in the distance But they saw only a haze made of three differe kinds of light *merging together* the river, the sky and the sun

She knelt on a rock, leaning forward, trying to catch some h of the city, the wind blowing her hair across her eyes She glanc back over her shoulder—and sa

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body, inexplicably his glance made her aware of her pose, of shoulder showing through the torn shirt, of her long, scratch sunburned legs slanting from the rock to the ground She stood angrily and backed away from him And while throwing her h up resentment in her eyes to meet the sternness in his, while feel certain that his was a *glance of* condemnation and hostility, heard herself asking him, a tone of smiling defiance in her voice

"What do you like about me?"

He laughed, she wondered, aghast, what had made her say it He answered, "There's what I like about you," pointing to the glittering rails of the Taggart station in the distance.

"It's not mine," she said, disappointed.

"What I like is that it's going to be"

She smiled, conceding his victory by being openly delighted She ld not know why he had looked at her so strangely, but she felt hat he had seen some connection, which she could not grasp, etween her body and something within her that would give her he strength to rule those rails some day

He said brusquely, "Let's see if we can see New York," and erked her by the arm to the edge of the cliff She thought that ie did not notice that he twisted her arm in a peculiar way, holding t down along the length of his side, it made her stand pressed against im, and she felt the warmth of the sun in the skin of his legs igainst hers They looked far out into the distance, but they saw iothing ahead except a haze of light.

When [illegible] an unknown danger It was like the moment, years ago, when she had seen him dive first from a rock into the Hudson, had seen him vanish under the black water and had stood, knowing that he would reappear in an instant and that it would then be her turn to follow

She dismissed the fear; dangers, to Francisco, were merely opportunities for another brilliant performance there were no battles he could lose, no enemies to beat him. And then she thought of a remark she had heard a few years earlier It was a strange remark —and it was strange that the words had remained in her mind, even though she had thought them senseless at the time The man who said it was an old professor of mathematics, a friend of her father, who came to their country house for just that one visit She liked his face, and she could still see the peculiar sadness in his eyes when he said to her father one evening, sitting on the terrace in the [illegible] chosen for him long ago It was the most distinguished institution of learning left in the world, the Patrick Henry University of Cleveland. He did not come to visit her in New York, that winter, even though he was only a night's journey away They did not write to each other, they had never done it But she knew that he would come back to the country for one summer month

There were a few times, that winter, when she felt an defined apprehension the professor's words kept returning to mind, as a warning which she could not explain She d., them. When she thought of Francisco she felt the steac. urance that she would have another month as an

the future, as a proof that the world she saw ahead was real, even though it was not the world of those around her

"Hi Slug!"

"Hi, Frisco!"

[illegible]

her eyelids and the upward thrust of such an immense relief that she ground her feet into the grass under her sandals, because she thought she would rise, weightless, through the wind

It was a sudden sense of freedom and safety—because she realized that she knew nothing about the events of his life, had never known and would never need to know The world of chance—of families, meals, schools, people, of aimless people dragging the load of some unknown guilt—was not theirs, could not change him, could not matter He and she had never spoken of the things that happened to them, but only of what they thought and of what they would do She looked at him silently, as if a voice within her were saying Not the things that are, but the things we'll make . We are not to be stopped, you and I . . . Forgive me the fear, if I thought I could lose you to them—forgive me the doubt, they'll never reach you—I'll never be afraid for you again.

He too, stood looking at her for a moment—and it seemed to her that it was not a look of greeting after an absence, but the look of someone who had thought of her every day of that year She could not be certain, it was only an instant, so brief that just as she caught it he was turning to point at the birch tree behind him and saying in the tone of their childhood game

"I wish you'd learn to run faster I'll always have to wait for you"

"Will you wait for me?" she asked gaily.

He answered, without smiling, "Always"

As they went up the hill to the house, he spoke to Eddie, while she walked silently by his side She felt that there was a new reticence between them which, strangely, was a new kind of intimacy

She did not question him about the [illegible] ater, she aske [illegible]

ther [illegible] red, "but

"Have you made any friends there?"

"Two"

He told her nothing else.

Jim was approaching his senior year in a college in New York. His studies had given him a manner of odd, quavering belligerence, as if he had found a new weapon He addressed Francisco once

[illegible]

earn something about ideals It's time to forget your selfish greed and give some thought to your social responsibilities, because I think that all those millions you're going to inherit are not for your personal pleasure, they are a trust for the benefit of the underprivileged and the poor, because I think that the person who doesn't realize this is the most depraved type of human being"

Francisco answered courteously, "It is not advisable, James, to venture unsolicited opinions You should spare yourself the embarrassing discovery of their exact value to your listener'

Dagny asked him, as they walked away, "Are there many men like Jim in the world?"

Francisco laughed "A great many"

"Don't you mind it?"

"No I don't have to deal with them Why do you ask that?'

"Because I think they're dangerous in some way I don't know how . . ."

"Good God, Dagny! Do you expect me to be afraid of an object like James?"

It was days later, when they were alone, walking through the woods on the shore of the river, that she asked

"Francisco, what's the most depraved type of human being?"

"The man without a purpose"

She was looking at the straight shafts of the trees that stood against the great, sudden, shining spread of space beyond The forest was dim and cool, but the outer branches caught the hot, silver sunrays from the water She wondered why she enjoyed the sight, when she had never taken any notice of the country around her, why she was so aware of her enjoyment, of her movements, of her body in the process of walking She did not want to look at Francisco She felt that his presence seemed more intensely real when she kept her eyes away from him, almost as if the stressed awareness of herself came from him, like the sunlight from the water

"You think you're good, don't you?" he asked.

"I always did," she answered defiantly, without turning

"Well, let me see you prove it Let me see how far you'll rise with Taggart Transcontinental No matter how good you are, I'll expect you to wring everything you've got, trying to be still better And when you've worn yourself out to reach a goal, I'll expect you to start for another"

"Why do you think that I care to prove anything to you?" she asked.

"Want me to answer?"

"No," she whispered, her eyes fixed upon the other shore of the river in the distance.

She heard him chuckling and after a while he said, "Dagny, there's nothing of any importance in life—except how well you do your work. Nothing Only that Whatever else you are, will come from that. It's the only measure of human value All the codes of ethics they'll try to ram down your throat are just so much paper money put out by swindlers to fleece people of

The code of competence is the only system of morality that's on a gold standard When you grow up you'll know what I mean."

I know it now But Francisco, why are you and I the only ones who seem to know it?'

"Why should you care about the others?'

"Because I like to understand things, and there's something about people that I can't understand"

'What?"

grades in the class I don't even have to study I always get A's Do you suppose I should try to get D's for a change and become the most popular girl in school?

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felt pleasure from the dull, not pain in her cheek and from the taste of blood in the corner of her mouth She felt pleasure in what she suddenly grasped about him, about herself and about his motive

She braced her feet to stop the dizziness, she held her head straight and stood facing him in the consciousness of a new power feeling herself his equal for the first time, looking at him with a mocking smile of triumph.

"Did I hurt you as much as that?" she asked.

He looked astonished, the question and the smile were not those of a child. He answered, "Yes—if it pleases you."

"It does"

"Don't ever do that again Don't crack jokes of that kind"

"Don't be a fool. Whatever made you think that I cared about being popular?"

"When you grow up, you'll understand what sort of unspeakable thing you said"

"I understand it now."

He turned abruptly, took out his handkerchief and dipped it in the water of the river "Come here, he ordered.

She laughed, stepping back. "Oh no I want to keep it as it is I hope it swells terribly I like it."

He looked at her for a long moment. He said slowly, very earnestly "Dagny, you're wonderful"

"I thought that you always thought so," she answered, her voice insolently casual

When she came home, she told her mother that she had cut her lip by falling against a rock. It was the only lie she ever told She did not do it to protect Francisco, she did it because she felt, for some reason which she could not define, that the incident was a secret too precious to share.

Next summer, when Francisco came, she was sixteen. She started running down the hill to meet him, but stopped abruptly He saw it, stopped and they stood for a moment, looking at each other across the distance of a long, green slope It was he who walked up toward her, walked very slowly, while she stood waiting

When he approached, she smiled innocently, as if unconscious of any contest intended or won

"You might like to know," she said, "that I have a job on the railroad Night operator at Rockdale"

He laughed 'All right, Taggart Transcontinental, now it's a race Let's see who'll do greater honor, you—to Nat Taggart, or I—to Sebastián d Anconia."

That winter, she stripped her life down to the bright simplicity of a geometrical drawing a few straight lines—to and from the engineering college in the city each day, to and from her job at Rockdale Station each night—and the closed circle of her room, a room littered with diagrams of motors, blueprints of steel structures and railroad timetables

Mrs. Taggart watched her daughter in unhappy bewilderment. She could have forgiven all the omissions but one Dagny showed no sign of interest in men, no romantic inclination whatever Mrs Taggart did not approve of extremes, she had been prepared to contend with an extreme of the opposite kind if necessary, she found herself thinking that this was worse She felt embarrassed when she had to admit that her daughter, at seventeen, did not have a single admirer

"Dagny and Francisco d'Anconia?" she said smiling ruefully, in answer to the curiosity of her friends 'Oh no it's not a romance It's an international industrial cartel of some kind. That s all they seem to care about"

Mrs Taggart heard James say one evening, in the presence of guests, a peculiar tone of satisfaction in his voice, "Dagny, even though you were named after her, you really look more like Nat Taggart than like that first Dagny Taggart, the famous beauty who was his wife" Mrs Taggart did not know which offended her most that James said it or that Dagny accepted it happily as a compliment.

She would never have a chance, thought Mrs Taggart, to form some conception of her own daughter Dagny was only a figure hurrying in and out of the apartment a slim figure in a leather jacket, with a raised collar, a short skirt and long show girl legs She walked cutting across a room with a masculine, straight line abruptness but she had a peculiar grace of motion that was swift, tense and oddly challengingly feminine

At times catching a glimpse of Dagny's face, Mrs. Taggart caught an expression which she could not quite define it was much more than gaiety, it was the look of such an untouched purity of enjoyment that she found it abnormal too no young girl could be so insensitive as to have discovered no sadness in life. Her daughter, she concluded was incapable of emotion

"Dagny," she asked once, "don't you ever want

time?" Dagny looked at her incredulously and answered, "What do you think I'm having?"

The decision to give her daughter a formal debut cost Mrs. Taggart a great deal of anxious thought She did not know whether she was introducing to New York society Miss Dagny Taggart of the Social Register or the night operator of Rockdale Station, she was inclined to believe it was more truly this last; and she felt certain that Dagny would reject the idea of such an occasion. She was astonished when Dagny accepted it with inexplicable eagerness, for once like a child

She was astonished again, when she saw Dagny dressed for the party. It was the first feminine dress she had ever worn—a gown of white chiffon with a huge skirt that floated like a cloud. Mrs Taggart had expected her to look like a preposterous contrast. Dagny looked like a beauty. She seemed both older and more radiantly ... head ... in se

"Yes," said Dagny, without any astonishment.

The ballroom of the Wayne Falkland Hotel had been decorated under Mrs Taggart's direction, she had an artist's taste, and the ... things ... wers, ... never ... Mrs. ... with ... eauti-ful," said Mrs Taggart "I want this evening to be very beautiful for you, Dagny The first ball is the most romantic event of one's life."

To Mrs Taggart, the greatest surprise was the moment when she saw Dagny standing under the lights, looking at the ballroom. This was not a child, not a girl, ... dangerous power that Mrs. Tag ... admiration In an age of casual, ... people who held themselves as if they were not flesh, but meat—Dagny's bearing seemed almost indecent, because this was the way a woman would have faced a ballroom centuries ago, when the act of displaying one's half naked body for the admiration of men was an act of daring, when it had meaning, and but one meaning, acknowledged by all as a high adventure And this—thought Mrs. Taggart, smiling—was the girl she had believed to be devoid of sexual capacity She felt an immense relief, and a touch of amusement at the thought that a discovery of this kind should make her feel relieved

... piciously empty.

Neither Dagny nor Mrs Taggart said a word when they rode home together But hours later on a sudden impulse Mrs Taggart

morning

When Dagny turned Mrs Taggart saw only puzzled helplessness in her face the face was calm but something about it made Mrs Taggart wish she had not wished that her daughter should discover sadness

"Mother do they think it s exactly in reverse? she asked

"What? asked Mrs Taggart bewildered

"The things you were talking about The lights and the flowers Do they expect those things to make them romantic not the other way around?"

"Darling what do you mean?"

"There wasn t a person there who enjoyed it" she said her voice lifeless "or who thought or felt anything at all They moved about,

"What men? There wasn t a man there I couldn t squash ten of"

Days later sitting at her desk at Rockdale Stat on feeling light heartedly at home Dagny thought of the party and shrugged in contemptuous reproach at her own d sappointment She looked up it was spring and there were leaves on the tree branches in the darkness outside the air was still and warm She asked herself what she had expected from that party She did not know But she felt it aga n here now as she sat slouched over a battered desk, looking out into the darkness a sense of expectation without object, rising through her body slowly like a warm liquid She slumped forward across the desk lazily feeling neither exhaustion nor desire to work.

When Francisco came that summer she told him about the party and about her disappointment He listened silently looking at her for the first time with that glance of unmoving mockery which he reserved for others a glance that seemed to see too much She felt as if he heard in her words more than she knew she told him

She saw the same glance in his eyes on the evening when she left h m too early They were alone sitting on the shore of the river She had another hour before she was due at Rockdale There were long, thin strips of fire in the sky and red sparks floating lazily on the water He had been s lent for a long time, when she rose abruptly and told h m that she had to go He d d not try to stop her he leaned back his elbows in the grass and looked at her w thout moving h s glance seemed to say that he knew her motive Hurrying angrily up the slope to the house she wondered what

had made her leave she did not know, it had been a sudden restlessness that came from a feeling she did not identify till now a feeling of expectation

Each night she drove the five miles from the country house to Rockdale She came back at dawn, slept a few hours and got up with the rest of the household She felt no desire to sleep Undressing for bed in the first rays of the sun, she felt a tense, joyous, causeless impatience to face the day that was starting

She saw Francisco s mocking glance again, across the net of a tennis court She did not remember the beginning of that game, they had often played tennis together and he had always won She did not know at what moment she decided that she would win, this time When she became aware of it, it was no longer a decision or a wish, but a quiet fury rising within her She did not know why she had to win, she did not know why it seemed so crucially, urgently necessary, she knew only that she had to and that she would

It seemed easy to play it was as if her will had vanished and someone s power were playing for her She watched Francisco's figure—a tall swift figure the suntan of his arms stressed by his short white shirt sleeves She felt an arrogant pleasure in seeing the skill of his movements because *this* was the thing which she would beat so that his every expert gesture became her victory, and the brilliant competence of his body became the triumph of hers

She felt the rising pain of exhaustion—not knowing that it was pain feeling it only in sudden stabs that made her aware of some part of her body for an instant, to be forgotten in the next her arm socket—her shoulder blades—her hips, with the white shorts sticking to her skin—the muscles of her legs, when she leaped to meet the ball but did not remember whether she came down to touch the ground again—her eyelids when the sky went dark red and the ball came at her through the darkness like a whirling white flame—the thin, hot wire that shot from her ankle, up her back and went on shooting straight across the air, driving the ball at Francisco s figure She felt an exultant pleasure—because every stab of pain begun in her body had to end in his because he was being exhausted as she was—what she did to herself, she was doing it also to him—this was what he felt—this was what she drove him to—it was not her pain that she felt or her body but his

In the moments when she saw his face she saw that he was laughing He was looking at her as if he understood He was playing, not to win, but to make it harder for her—sending his shots wild to make her run—losing points to *see her twist her* body in an agonizing backhand—standing still, letting her think he would miss, only to let his arm shoot out casually at the last moment and send the ball back with such force that she knew she would miss it She felt as if she could not move *again, not ever*—and it was strange to find herself landing suddenly at the other side of the court, smashing the ball in time smashing it

if she wished it to burst to pieces, as if she wished it were ancisco s face

Just once more, she thought, even if the next one would ack the bones of her arm . Just once more even if the air uch she forced down in gasps past her tight, swollen throat, ould be stopped altogether Then she felt nothing, no in, no muscles, only the thought that she had to beat him to e him exhausted, to see him collapse, and then she would be e to die in the next moment.

She won. Perhaps it was his laughing that made him lose, for ce He walked to the net, while she stood still and threw his cket across, at her feet, as if knowing that this was what she wanted e walked out of the court and fell down on the grass of the wn, collapsing, his head on his arm

She approached him slowly She stood over him looking wn at his body stretched at her feet, looking at his sweat enched shirt and the strands of his hair spilled across his arm e raised his head. His glance moved slowly up the line of her s, to her shorts, to her blouse to her eyes It was a mocking ance that seemed to see straight through her clothes and rough her mind. And it seemed to say that he had won.

She sat at her desk at Rockdale, that night, alone in the old ation building, looking at the sky in the window It was the ur she liked best, when the top panes of the window grew hter and the rails of the track outside became threads of blurred ver across the lower panes. She turned off her lamp and watched e vast, soundless motion of light over a motionless earth Things od still, not a leaf trembled on the branches while the sky wly lost its color and became an expanse that looked like a read of glowing water

Her telephone was silent at this hour almost as if movement d stopped everywhere along the system She heard steps approach g outside, suddenly, close to the door Francisco came in. He had ver come here before, but she was not astonished to see him.

"What are you doing up at this hour?" she asked.

"I didn't feel like sleeping "

"How did you get here? I didn't hear your car "

"I walked "

Moments passed before she realized that she had not asked him hy he came and that she did not want to ask it.

He wandered through the room looking at the clusters of way lls that hung on the walls at the calendar with a picture of the aggart Comet caught in a proud surge of motion toward the looker He seemed casually at home as if he felt that the place longed to them, as they always felt wherever they went together ut he did not seem to want to talk. He asked a few questions about r job then he kept silent.

As the light grew outside movement grew down on the line and e telephone started ringing in the silence She turned to her work e sat in a corner, one leg thrown over the arm of his chair, ating.

She worked swiftly, feeling inordinately clear headed She found pleasure in the rapid precision of her hands She concentrated or the sharp, bright sound of the phone, on the figures of train numbers, car numbers, order numbers She was conscious of nothin else

But when a thin sheet of paper fluttered down to the floor an she bent to pick it up, she was suddenly as intently conscious o that particular moment, of herself and her own movement Sh noticed her gray linen skirt, the rolled sleeve of her gray blouse an her naked arm reaching down for the paper She felt her hear stop causelessly in the kind of gasp one feels in moments of antic pation She picked up the paper and turned back to her desk.

It was almost full daylight A train went past the station, withou stopping In the purity of the morning light, the long line of ca roofs melted into a silver string and the train seemed suspende above the ground not quite touching it, going past through th air The floor of the station trembled, and glass rattled in th windows She watched the train s flight with a smile of excitemer She glanced at Francisco he was looking at her, with the san smile

When the day operator arrived, she turned the station over him and they walked out into the morning air The sun had n yet risen and the air seemed radiant in its stead She felt no exhaustion She felt as if she were just getting up

She started toward her car, but Francisco said, "Let s walk home We'll come for the car later"

"All right."

She was not astonished and she did not mind the prospect of walking five miles It seemed natural natural to the moment's peculiar reality that was sharply clear but cut off from everything, immediate, but disconnected, like a bright island in a wall of fog, the heightened, unquestioning reality one feels when one is drunk.

The road led through the woods They left the highway for an old trail that went twisting among the trees across miles of untouched country There were no traces of human existence around them Old ruts, overgrown with grass made human presence seem more distant, adding the distance of years to the distance of miles A haze of twilight remained over the ground, but in the breaks between the tree trunks there were leaves that hung in patches of shining green and seemed to light the forest The leaves hung still They walked, alone to move through a motionless world She noticed suddenly that they had not said a word for a long time

They came to a clearing It was a small hollow at the bottom of a shaft made of straight rock hillsides A stream cut across the grass, and tree branches flowed low to the ground, like a curtain of green fluid The sound of the water stressed the silence The distant cut of open sky made the place seem more hidden Far above, on the crest of a hill, one tree caught the first rays of sunlight

They stopped and looked at each other She knew, only when he did it, that she had known he would He seized her, she felt her

ps in his mouth, felt her arms grasping him in violent answer, and new for the first time how much she had wanted him to do it.

She felt a moment's rebellion and a hint of fear He held her ressing the length of his body against hers with a tense, purposeful

...

...ou of his purpose, her vague knowledge of it was wiped out he had no power to believe it clearly, in this moment, to believe it about herself, she knew only that she was afraid—yet what she felt was as if she were crying to him Don t ask me for it—oh don t ask me—do it!

She braced her feet for an instant, to resist, but his mouth was pressed to hers and they went down to the ground together never breaking their lips apart She lay still—as the motionless, then the quivering object of an act which he did simply, unhesitatingly, as of right, the right of the unendurable pleasure it gave them

He named what it meant to both of them in the first words he spoke afterwards He said "We had to learn it from each other" She looked at his long figure stretched on the grass beside her, he wore black slacks and a black shirt, her eyes stopped on the belt pulled tight across his slender waistline and she felt the stab of an emotion that was like a gasp of pride pride in her ownership of his body She lay on her back, looking up at the sky, feeling no desire to move or think or know that there was any time beyond this moment.

When she came home, when she lay in bed, naked because her body had become an unfamiliar possession, too precious for the touch of a nightgown, because it gave her pleasure to feel naked and to feel as if the white sheets of her bed were touched by Francisco s body—when she thought that she would not sleep, because she did not want to rest and lose the most wonderful exhaustion she had ever known—her last thought was of the times when she had wanted to express, but found no way to do it, an instant s knowledge of a feeling greater than happiness, the feeling of one s blessing upon the whole of the earth, the feeling of being in love with the fact that one exists and in this kind of world she thought that the act she had learned was the way one ex pressed it If this was a thought of the gravest importance she did not know it, nothing could be grave in a universe from which the concept of pain had been wiped out, she was not there to weigh her conclusion, she was asleep, a faint smile on her face, in a silent, luminous room filled with the light of morning.

That summer, she met him in the woods, in hidden corners b the river, on the floor of an abandoned shack, in the cellar of th house These were the only times when she learned to feel a sen of beauty—by looking up at old wooden rafters or at the ste plate of an air-conditioning machine that whirred tensely, rhythm ally above their heads She wore slacks or cotton summer dresse yet she was never so feminine as when she stood beside him, saggi in his arms, abandoning herself to anything he wished, in ope acknowledgment of his power to reduce her to helplessness by t pleasure he had the power to give her. He taught her every mann of sensuality he could invent "Isn't it wonderful that our bod can give us so much pleasure?' he said to her once, quite simpl They were happy and radiantly innocent. They were both incapa of the conception that joy is sin

They kept their secret from the knowledge of others, not as a shameful guilt, but as a thing that was immaculately theirs, beyond anyone's right of debate or appraisal She knew the general doctrine on sex, held by people in one form or another, the doctrine that sex was an ugly weakness of man's lower nature, to be condoned regretfully She experienced an emotion of chastity that made her shrink, not from the desires of her body, but from any contact with the minds who held this doctrine

That winter, Francisco came to see her in New York, at unpredictable intervals He would fly down from Cleveland, without warning, twice a week, or he would vanish for months She would sit on the floor of her room, surrounded by charts and blueprints, she would hear a knock at her door and snap, "I'm busy!" then hear a mocking voice ask, "Are you?" and leap to her feet to throw the door open, to find him standing there They would go to an apartment he had rented in the city, a small apartment in a quiet neighborhood "Fran[illegible]

ment, "I'm your [illegible]

are " She felt the [illegible]

granted the title [illegible]

In the many months of his absence, she never wondered whethe he was true to her or not, she knew he was She knew, eve though she was too young to know the reason, that indiscriminat desire and unselective indulgence were possible only to those wh [illegible]

[illegible] She [illegible] es [illegible] of exhaustio that comes from driving one's energy beyond its limit She laughe at him once, boasting that she was an old employee of Tagga Transcontinental [illegible] g H [illegible] unt [illegible] espec [illegible] s no [illegible] orld.

She did not learn the story until the next fall, when he had aduated and returned to New York after a visit to his father Buenos Aires Then he told her that he had taken two courses education during the last four years one at the Patrick Henry iversity, the other in a copper foundry on the outskirts of eveland. "I like to learn things for myself," he said He had irted working at the foundry as furnace boy, when he was sixteen and now, at twenty, he owned it. He acquired his first title of operty, with the aid of some inaccuracy about his age, on the y when he received his university diploma, and he sent them both his father

He showed her a photograph of the foundry It was a small, grimy ace, disreputable with age, battered by years of a losing struggle, ove its entrance gate, like a new flag on the mast of a derelict, ing the sign d'Anconia Copper

The public relations man of his father s office in New York had oaned, outraged, "But, Don Francisco, you can't do that! What ill the public think? *That* name on a dump of this kind?" "It s my me," Francisco had answered.

When he entered his father's office in Buenos Aires, a large om, severe and modern as a laboratory, with photographs of the operties of d'Anconia Copper as sole ornament on its walls—otographs of the greatest mines, ore docks and foundries in the orld—he saw, in the place of honor, facing his father s desk, a hotograph of the Cleveland foundry with the new sign above its ite

His father's eyes moved from the photograph to Francisco s face he stood in front of the desk.

"Isn't it a little too soon?" his father asked.

"I couldn t have stood four years of nothing but lectures '

"Where did you get the money for your first payment on that roperty?"

"By playing the New York stock market."

"*What?* Who taught you to do that?"

"It is not difficult to judge which industrial ventures will succeed nd which won't."

"Where did you get the money to play with?"

"From the allowance you sent me, sir, and from my wages "

"When did you have time to watch the stock market?"

"While I was writing a thesis on the influence—upon subsequent etaphysical systems—of Aristotle s theory of the Immovable Mover "

Francisco's stay in New York was brief, that fall. His father as sending him to Montana as assistant superintendent of a l'Anconia mine "Oh well," he said to Dagny, smiling, "my father oes not think it advisable to let me rise too fast. I would not ask im to take me on faith. If he wants a factual demonstration, I shall omply" In the spring, [illegible] came back as head of the New [illegible]

[illegible] knew

[illegible] after

nexpectedly—and she
presence in her life,
r at any moment
hought of his hands

as she had seen them on the wheel of a motorboat he drove his business with the same smooth, dangerous, confidently mastered speed But one small incident remained in her mind as a shock i did not fit him She saw him standing at the window of his office

would not tell her what it was

When she saw him again no trace of that incident remained his manner It was spring and they stood together on the roof terrace of a restaurant, the light silk of her evening gown blowing in the wind against his tall figure in formal black clothes They looked

He was twenty three when his father died and he went to Buenos Aires to take over the d Anconia estate, now his She did not see him again for three years

He wrote to her, at first, at random intervals He wrote about d Anconia Copper, about the world market, about issues affecting the interests of Taggart Transcontinental His letters were brief written by hand, usually at night

She was not unhappy in his absence She, too, was making h first steps toward the control of a future kingdom Among the leaders of industry, her father's friends, she heard it said that o had better watch the young d Anconia heir, if that copper compa had been great before, it would sweep the world now, under wh his management promised to become She smiled, without astonis ment There were moments when she felt a sudden, violent longi for him but it was only impatience, not pain She dismissed it, the confident knowledge that they were both working toward future that would bring them everything they wanted, includ each other Then his letters stopped

She was twenty four on that day of spring when the telepho rang on her desk, in an office of the Taggart Building "Dagny," s a voice she recognized at once, "I'm at the Wayne Falkland Co to have dinner with me tonight. At seven" He said it with greeting, as if they had parted the day before Because it took a moment to regain the art of breathing she realized for the f time how much that voice meant to her. "All right . . . Francisc

e answered. They needed to say nothing else. She thought, re-acing the receiver, that his return was natural and as she had ways expected it to happen, except that she had not expected her dden need to pronounce his name or the stab of happiness she lt while pronouncing it.

When she entered his hotel room, that evening, she stopped ort. He stood in the middle of the room, looking at her—and she w a smile that came slowly, involuntarily, as if he had lost the ility to smile and were astonished that he should regain it. He [illegible] at she was or [illegible] for help of a [illegible] d started their [illegible], he had started to say, "Hi— but he did not finish it. stead, after a moment, he said, "You're beautiful, Dagny." He said as if it hurt him.

"Francisco, I—"

He shook his head, not to let her pronounce the words they had ever said to each other—even though they knew that both had id and heard them in that moment.

He approached, he took her in his arms, he kissed her mouth nd held her for a long time. When she looked up at his face, he was miling down at her confidently, derisively It was a smile that told er he was in control of himself, of her, of everything, and rdered her to forget what she had seen in that first moment. "Hi, lug," he said.

Feeling certain of nothing except that she must not ask questions, he smiled and said, "Hi, Frisco."

She could have understood any change, but not the things she aw There was no sparkle of life in his face, no hint of amuse-ment; the face had become implacable The plea of his first smile ad not been a plea of weakness, he had acquired an air of determi-nation that seemed merciless. He acted like a man who stood traight, under the weight of an unendurable burden She saw what he could not have believed possible that there were lines of bitter-ness in his face and that he looked tortured.

"Dagny, don't be astonished by anything I do," he said, "or by nything I may ever do in the future."

That was the only explanation he granted her, then proceeded to ct as if there were nothing to explain.

She could feel no more than a f[illegible] [illegible]

The dinner was served in his room. She found it amusing to face im across a table laid out with the icy formality pertaining to excessive cost, in a hotel room designed as a European palace

The Wayne-Falkland was the most distinguished hotel left on any continent. Its style of indolent luxury, of velvet drapes, sculptured panels and candlelight, seemed a deliberate contrast to its function. No one could afford its hospitality except men who came to New York on business, to settle transactions involving the world. She

noticed that the manner of the waiters who served their d nner suggested a special deference to this particular guest of the hotel, and that Francisco did not notice it He was indifferently at home. He had long since become accustomed to the fact that he was Senor d Anconia of d Anconia Copper

But she thought it strange that he did not speak about his work. She had expected it to be his only interest the first thing he would share with her He did not mention it He led her to talk instead, about her job her progress and what she felt for Taggart Transcontinental She spoke of it as she had always spoken to him in the knowledge that he was the only one who could understand her passionate devotion He made no comment but he listened intently

A waiter had turned on the radio for dinner music they had paid no attention to it But suddenly a crash of sound jarred the room almost as if a subterranean blast had struck the walls and made them tremble The shock came not from the loudness but from the quality of the sounds It was Halley s new Concerto recently written the Fourth

They sat in silence listening to the statement of rebellion—the anthem of the triumph of the great victims who would refuse to accept pain Francisco listened looking out at the city

Without transition or warning he asked, his voice oddly unstressed "Dagny what would you say if I asked you to leave Taggart Transcontinental and let it go to hell, as it will when your brother takes over?'

"What would I say if you asked me to consider the idea of committing su cide? she answered angrily

He remained silent

Why did you say that?" she snapped I didn t think you'd joke about it It s not like you"

There was no touch of humor in his face He answered quietly gravely "No Of course I shouldn t

She brought herself to question him about his work He answered the questions he volunteered nothing She repeated to him the comments of the industrialists about the brilliant prospects of d Anconia Copper under his management "That s true, he said his voice lifeless

In sudden anxiety not knowing what prompted her, she asked "Franc sco why did you come to New York?'

He answered slowly 'To see a friend who called for me."

"Business?"

Looking past her as if answering a thought of his own, a faint smile of bitter amusement on his face, but his voice strangely soft and sad he answered

"Yes"

It was long past midnight when she awakened in bed by his side No sounds came from the city below The stillness of the room made life seem suspended for a while Relaxed in happiness and in complete exhaustion she turned lazily to glance at him He lay on his back, half-propped by a pillow She saw his profile against the

gy glow of the night sky in the window He was awake his eyes

"You."
"Why should—"
"And everything."
"Why should you give it up?"
"Dagny! Help me to remain To refuse Even though he s right!"
She asked evenly, "To refuse what, Francisco?"
He did not answer, only pressed his face harder against her
She lay very still, conscious of nothing but a supreme need of
ution. His head on her breast her hand caressing his hair gently,
adily, she lay looking up at the ceiling of the room, at the
lptured garlands faintly visible in the darkness, and she waited,
mb with terror
He moaned, "It s right, but it s so hard to do! Oh God, it s so
rd!"
After a while, he raised his head. He sat up He had stopped
mbling
"What is it, Francisco?"
"I can t tell you" His voice was simple open, without attempt to
sguise suffering but it was a voice that obeyed him now "You re
t ready to hear it."
"I want to help you"
"You can't."
"You said, to help you refuse"
"I can't refuse"
"Then let me share it with you"
He shook his head
He sat looking down at her, as if weighing a question Then he
ook his head again in answer to himself
"If I m not sure I can stand it," he said and the strange new note
his voice was tenderness "how could you?
She said slowly with effort trying to keep herself from scream
g, "Francisco, I have to know"
"Will you forgive me? I know you're frightened and it s cruel.
ut will you do this for me—will you let it go just let it go and
on t ask me anything?"
"I—"
"That's all you can do for me Will you?"
"Yes, Francisco"
"Don't be afraid for me It was just this once It won't happen
o me again It will become much easier . . . later"
"If I could—"

"No Go to sleep, dearest"

It was the first time he had ever used that word.

In the morning, he faced her openly, not avoiding her anxious glance, but saying nothing about it She saw both serenity and suffering in the calm of his face, an expression like a smile of pain, though he was not smiling Strangely, it made him look younger He did not look like a man bearing torture now, but like a man who sees that which makes the torture worth bearing

She did not question him Before leaving, she asked only, "When will I see you again?"

He answered, 'I don't know Don't wait for me, Dagny Next time we meet, you will not want to see me I will have a reason for the things I'll do But I can t tell you the reason and you will be right to damn me I am not committing the contemptible act of asking you to take me on faith. You have to live by your own knowledge and judgment You will damn me You will be hurt Try not to let it hurt you too much Remember that I told you this and that it was all I could tell you"

She heard nothing from him or about him for a year When she began to hear gossip and to read newspaper stories, she did not believe, at first, that they referred to Francisco d Anconia. After a while, she had to believe it.

She read the story of the party he gave on his yacht, in the harbor of Valparaiso, the guests wore bathing suits, and an artificial rain of champagne and flower petals kept falling upon the decks throughout the night

She read the story of the party he gave at an Algerian desert resort, he built a pavilion of thin sheets of ice and presented every woman guest with an ermine wrap, as a gift to be worn for the occasion, on condition that they remove their wraps, then their evening gowns, then all the rest, in tempo with the melting of the walls

She read the accounts of the business ventures he undertook at lengthy intervals the ventures were spectacularly successful and [illegible] ment of his employees

She read the interview where he said, "Why should I wish to make money? I have enough to permit three generations of descendants [illegible] again

She survived it. She was able to survive it, because she did not believe in suffering She faced with astonished indignation the ugly fact of feeling pain, and refused to let it matter Suffering was a accident, it was not part of life as she saw it. She would not

allow pain to become important. She had no name for the kind of resistance she offered, for the emotion from which the resistance came, but the words that stood as its equivalent in her mind were It does not count—it is not to be taken seriously She knew these were the words, even in the moments when there was nothing left within her but screaming and she wished she could lose the faculty of consciousness so that it would not tell her that what could not be true was true Not to be taken seriously—an immovable certainty within her kept repeating—pain and ugliness are never to be taken seriously.

She fought it. She recovered. Years helped her to reach the day when she could face her memories indifferently, then the day when she felt no necessity to face them It was finished and of no concern to her

work. Once, Francisco had given her the same sense, a feeling that belonged with her work and in her world The men she had met since were like the men she met at her first ball

She had won the battle against her memories But one form of torture remained, untouched by the years, the torture of the word "why?"

Whatever the tragedy he met, why had Francisco taken the 'gliest way of escape, as ignoble as the way of some cheap alcoholic? he boy she had known could not have become a useless coward in incomparable mind could not turn its ingenuity to the invention f melting ballrooms Yet he had and did, and there was no ex lanation to make it conceivable and to let her forget him in peace he could not doubt the fact of what he had been she could not loubt the fact of what he had become, yet one made the other mpossible At times, she almost doubted her own rationality or he existence of any rationality anywhere but this was a doubt which she did not permit to anyone Yet there was no explanation, io reason, no clue to any conceivable reason—and in all the days of ten years she had found no hint of an answer

No she thought—as she walked through the gray twilight, past he windows of abandoned shops, to the Wayne Falkland Hotel—so there could be no answer. She would not seek it. It did not natter now

The remnant of violence, the emotion rising as a thin trembling within her, was not for the man she was going to see, it was a cry of protest against a sacrilege—against the destruction of what had been greatness

In a break between buildings, she saw the towers of the Wayne-Falkland She felt a slight jolt, in her lungs and legs, that stopped her for an instant. Then she walked on evenly

By the time she walked through the marble lobby, to the elevator, then down the wide, velvet-carpeted, soundless corridors of the Wayne Falkland, she felt nothing but a cold anger that with every step

She was certain of the anger when she knocked at his door She heard his voice answering 'Come in' She jerked the door open and entered

Francisco Domingo Carlos Andres Sebastián d Anconia sat on the floor playing marbles

Nobody ever wondered whether Francisco d Anconia was good looking or not it seemed irrelevant when he entered a room it was impossible to look at anyone else His tall slender figure had an air of distinction too authentic to be modern, and he moved as if he had a cape floating behind him in the wind People explained him by saying that he had the vitality of a healthy animal but they knew dimly that that was not correct He had the vitality of a healthy human being a thing so rare that no one could identify it He had the power of certainty

Nobody described his appearance as Latin, yet the word applied to him not in its present but in its original sense not pertaining to Spa n but to ancient Rome His body seemed designed as an exercise in consistency of style a style made of gauntness of tight flesh long legs and swift movements His features had the fine precision of sculpture His hair was black and straight swept back The suntan of his skin [illegible] they were a pure clear [illegible] expression reflecting [illegible] The blue eyes were [illegible] what he thought

He sat on the floor of his drawing room, dressed in sleeping pajamas of thin black silk. The marbles spread on the carpet around him were made of the semi precious stones of his native country carnelian and rock crystal He did not rise when Dagny entered He sat looking up at her and a crystal marble fell like a teardrop out of his hand He smiled, the unchanged, insolent brilliant smile of his childhood.

"Hi Slug!"

She heard herself answering irresistibly, helplessly, happily

"Hi Frisco!"

She was looking at his face it was the face she had known. It bore no mark of the kind of life he had led, nor of what she had seen on their last night together There was no sign of tragedy no bitterness no tension—only the radiant mockery, matured and stressed the look of dangerously unpredictable amusement, and the great g[illegible] possible th[illegible]

His eyes [illegible] sl pp ng off [illegible] looked like an [illegible]ice uniform.

"If you came here dressed [illegible] how lovely you are" he [illegible] w sh I could tell you wh[illegible] ligent though a woman s [illegible] not what you came here for

The words were improper in so many ways, yet were said so lightly that they brought her back to reality to anger and to the purpose of her visit She remained standing looking down at him, her face blank, refusing him any recognition of the personal even of its power to offend her. She said, I came here to ask you a question."

"Go ahead"

"When you told those reporters that you came to New York to witness the farce which farce did you mean?

He laughed aloud, like a man who seldom finds a chance to enjoy the unexpected

"That's what I like about you, Dagny There are seven million people in the city of New York, at present. Out of seven million people you are the only one to whom it could have occurred that I wasn't talking about the Vail divorce scandal"

"What were you talking about?"

"What alternative occurred to you?"

"The San Sebastian disaster"

"That's much more amusing than the Vail divorce scandal isn't it?"

She said in the solemn, merciless tone of a prosecutor "You did it consciously, cold bloodedly and with full intention

"Don't you think it would be better if you took your coat off and sat down?"

She knew she had made a mistake by betraying too much intensity She turned coldly removed her coat and threw it aside He did not rise to help her She sat down in an armchair He remained on the floor, at some distance, but it seemed as if he were sitting at her feet.

"What was it I did with full intention?" he asked.

"The entire San Sebastián swindle'

"What was my *full* intention?'

"That is what I want to know"

He chuckled, as if she had asked him to explain in conversation a complex science requiring a lifetime of study

"You knew that the San Sebastián mines were worthless she said. "You knew it before you began the whole wretched business"

"Then why did I begin it?"

"Don't start telling me that you gained nothing I know it. I know you lost fifteen million dollars of your own money Yet it was done on purpose."

"Can you think of a motive that would prompt me to do it?"

"No It's inconceivable."

"Is it? You assume that I have a great mind a great knowledge and a great productive ability so that anything I undertake must necessarily be successful And then you claim that I had no desire to put out my best effort for the People's State of Mexico Inconceivable, isn't it?"

"You knew before you bought that property, that Mexico was in the hands of a looters government. You didn't have to start a mining project for them."

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heard his voice, answering 'Come in' She jerked the door ope
and entered

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His eyes were studying her the battered coat thrown open, half slipping off her shoulders and the slender body in a gray suit that looked like an office uniform.

"*If* you came here dressed like this in order not to let me notice how lovely you are" *he* said "you miscalculated You re lovely I wish I could tell you what a *relief* it is to see a face thats intel ligent though a womans But you dont want to hear it Thats not what you came here for"

they overlooked They thought it was safe to ride on my brain, because they assumed that the goal of my journey was wealth All their calculations rested on the premise that I wanted to make money What if I didn't?

"If you didn t, what did you want?"

"They never asked me that Not to inquire about my aims, motives or desires is an essential part of their theory"

"If you didn t want to make money, what possible motive could you have had?"

"Any number of them. For instance to spend it"

"To spend money on a certain total failure?"

"How was I to know that those mines were a certain, total failure?"

"How could you help knowing it?"

"Quite simply By giving it no thought"

"You started that project without giving it any thought?"

"No not exactly But suppose I slipped up? I m only human I made a mistake I failed I made a bad job of it" He flicked his wrist, a crystal marble shot sparkling across the floor and cracked violently against a brown one at the other end of the room

"I don't believe it," she said

"No? But haven t I the right to be what is now accepted as human? Should I pay for everybody's mistakes and never be permitted one of my own?"

"That s not like you"

"No?" He stretched himself full length on the carpet lazily, relaxing "D d yo [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] he looked as he did The capacity for unclouded enjoyment, she thought, does not belong to irresponsible fools an inviolate peace of spirit is not the achievement of a drifter; to be able to laugh like that is the end result of the most profound, most solemn thinking.

Almost dispassionately, looking at his figure stretched on the carpet at her feet she observed what memory it brought back to her the black pajamas stressed the long lines of his body the open collar showed a smooth, young sunburned skin—and she thought of the figure in black slacks and shirt stretched beside her on the grass at sunrise She had felt pride then, the pride of knowing that she owned his body, she still felt it She remembered suddenly, specifically the [illegible] mory, should [illegible] still

Unaccountably, by an association of feeling that astonished her, she remembered what had conveyed to her recently the same sense of consummate joy as his

"Francisco she heard herself saying softly, "we both loved the music of Richard Halley . . ."

I still love it

'Have you ever met him?"

"Yes Why?

"Do you happen to know whether he has written a Fifth Con certo?

He remained perfectly still She had thought him impervious to shock, he wasn t But she could not attempt to guess why of all the things she had said this should be the first to reach him It was only an instant, then he asked evenly, "What makes you think he has?'

"Well has he?"

"You know that there are only four Halley Concertos"

"Yes But I wondered whether he had written another one."

"He has stopped writing"

"I know"

"Then what m de

"

"   e is he?'

you   What made

"

say there was I merely wondered about it"

'Why did you think of Richard Halley just now?"

"Because"—she felt her control cracking a little—'because my mind can t make the leap from Richard Halley's music to . . . to Mrs Gilbert Vail

He laughed, relieved 'Oh that? . . Incidentally, if you ve been following my publicity have you noticed a funny little dis- crepancy in the story of Mrs Gilbert Vail?"

"I don t read the stuff"

"You should She gave such a beautiful description of last New Year s Eve, which we spent together in my villa in the Andes The moonlight on the mountain peaks, and the blood-red flowers hanging on vines in the open windows See anything wrong in the picture?"

She said quietly, "It s I who should ask you that, and I'm not going to"

"Oh, I see nothing wrong—except

Orren Boyle"   your brother James and the Senor

She gasped, remembering that this was true, remembering also that she had seen Mrs Vail s story in the newspapers

"Francisco what . what does that mean?"

He chuckled "Draw your own conclusions . . . Dagny"—his face was serious—"why did you think of Halley writing a Fifth

ncerto? Why not a new symphony or opera? Why specifically a icerto?"

'Why does that disturb you?"

'It doesn t." He added softly, "I still love his music, Dagny" Then spoke lightly again "But it belonged to another age Our age vides a different kind of entertainment'

ople s State of Mexico in regard to the San Sebastián Mines?

He laughed, lying flat on his back his arms were thrown wide on carpet, forming a cross with his body, he seemed disarmed, ated and young

"It was worth whatever it s cost me I could afford the price of it show ... have beaten the ... —compared to

... nd sat shaking em absently in his hand, they clicked with the soft clear sound good stone She realized suddenly that playing with those marbles is not a deliberate affectation on his part, it was restlessness, he uld not remain inactive for long

"The ... issued a ... d put up ... fortune ... central anning council It was to raise everybody s standard of living and ovide a roast of pork every Sunday for every man woman child d abortion in the People s State of Mexico Now the planners e asking their people not to blame the government, but to blame e depravity of the rich, because I turned out to be an irresponsible ayboy, instead of the greedy capitalist I was expected to be How ere they to know, they're asking that I would let them down? ell true enough How were they to know it?"

She noticed the way he fingered the marbles in his hand. He as not conscious of it, he was looking off into some grim distance, ut she felt certain that the action was a relief to him perhaps as a ontrast. His fingers were moving slowly feeling the texture of the ones with sensual enjoyment Instead of finding it crude she found strangely attractive—as if, she thought suddenly, as if sensuality ere not physical at all, but came from a fine discrimination of he spirit.

"And that s not all they didn t know," he said. "They're in ome more knowledge There s that housing settlement orkers of San Sebastián. It cost eight million dollars

houses with plumbing electricity and refrigeration. Also a school a church, a hospital and a movie theater A settlement built for people who had lived in hovels made of driftwood and stray tin cans My reward for building it was to be the privilege of escaping with my skin a special concession due to the accident of my not being a native of the Peoples State of Mexico That workers settlement was also part of their plans A model example of progressive State housing Well those steel frame houses are mainly cardboard with a coating of good imitation shellac They won stand another year The plumbing pipes—as well as most of our mining equ pment—were purchased from dealers whose main source of supply are the city dumps of Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro I d give those pipes another five months and the electric system about six The wonderful roads we graded up four thousand fee of rock for the Peoples State of Mexico will not last beyond a couple of winters they re cheap cement without foundation and the bracing at the bad turns is just painted clapboard Wait for on good mountain slide The church, I think, will stand They ll nee it"

Francisco" she whispered did you do it on purpose?

He raised his head she was startled to see that his face had look of infinite weariness Whether I did it on purpose" he sai "or through neglect or through stupidity don t you understan that that doesn t make any difference? The same element was miss ing"

She was trembling Against all her decisions and control sl cried "Francisco! If you see what s happening in the world if yo understand all the things you said you can t laugh about it! Yo of all men *you* should fight them!"

"Whom?"

"The looters and those who make world looting possible T Mexican planners and their kind"

His smile had a dangerous edge No my dear It s you that I ha to fight

She looked at him blankly "What are you trying to say?"

"I am saying that the workers settlement of San Sebastian co eight million dollars" he answered with slow emphasis his vo hard. "The price paid for those cardboard houses was the pr that could have bought steel structures So was the price paid f every other item That money went to men who grow rich by su methods Such men do not remain rich for long The money will into channels wh ch will carry it not to the most producti but to the most corrupt By the standards of our time the m who has the least to offer is the man who wins That money v vanish in projects such as the San Sebastian Mines"

She asked with effort "Is that what you re after?"

"Yes"

"Is that what you find amusing?"

"Yes"

"I am th nking of your name" she said while another part mind was crying to her that reproaches were useless "It wa

...ition of your family that a d'Anconia always left a fortune ...ter than the one he received."

...Oh yes, my ancestors had a remarkable ability for doing the ...t thing at the right time—and for making the right invest...its Of course, 'investment' is a relative term It depends on ...t you wish to accomplish For instance, look at San Sebastián

...sequences That's not a bad return on an investment, is it, ...gny?"

...he was sitting straight. "Do you realize what you're saying?"

...Oh fully! Shall I beat you to it and name the consequences ...were going to reproach me for? First, I don t think that Taggart ...nscontinental will recover from its loss on that preposterous ...Sebastián Line You think it will, but it won t Second, the ...Sebastián helped your brother James to destroy the Phoenix ...rango which was about the only good railroad left anywhere"

'You realize all that?"

'And a great deal more"

'Do you"—she did not know why she had to say it, except that ...memory of the face with the dark, violent eyes seemed to stare ...her—"do you know Ellis Wyatt?"

'Sure."

"Do you know what this might do to him?"

"Yes He s the one who s going to be wiped out next."

"Do you . find that . . . amusing?"

'Much more amusing than the ruin of the Mexican planners"

She stood up She had called him corrupt for years she had ...ired it, she had thought about it, she had tried to forget it and ...ver think of it again, but she had never suspected how far the ...rruption had gone

She was not looking at him; she did not know that she was saying aloud, quoting his words of the past " who'll do greater ...nor, you—to Nat Taggart, or I—to Sebastián d Anconia "

"But didn t you realize that I named those mines in honor of ...y great ancestor? I think it was a tribute which he would have ...ted."

It took her a moment to recover her eyesight she had never ...own what was meant by blasphemy or what one felt on en...untering it, she knew it now

He had ... it was

... e what

"I came here because I wanted to know the reason for what ...ou've done with your life," she said tonelessly, without anger

"I have told you the reason," he answered gravely, "but you don t ...nt to believe it."

"I kept seeing you as you were. I couldn't forget ... you

should have become what you are—*that* does not belong in a rational universe"

'No? And the world as you see it around you, does?"

"You were not the kind of man who gets broken by any kind of world"

"True"

"Then—why?"

He shrugged 'Who is John Galt?"

"Oh, don't use gutter language!"

He glanced at her His lips held the hint of a smile, but his eyes were still, earnest and, for an instant, disturbingly perceptive.

Why? she repeated

He answered, as he had answered in the night, in this hotel, ten years ago, 'You're not ready to hear it"

He did not follow her to the door She had put her hand on the doorknob when she turned—and stopped He stood across the room, looking at her, it was a glance directed at her whole person; she knew its meaning and it held her motionless

'I still want to sleep with you," he said "But I am not a mar who is happy enough to do it"

Not happy enough?" she repeated in complete bewilderment.

He laughed "Is it proper that that should be the first thing you' answer?" He waited, but she remained silent "You want it, too don t you?

She was about to answer "No," but realized that the truth wa worse than that "Yes," she answered coldly, "but it doesn't matte to me that I want it."

He smiled, in open appreciation, acknowledging the strength sh had needed to say it

But he was not smiling when he said, as she opened the doc to leave, "You have a great deal of courage, Dagny Some da you'll have enough of it."

"Of what? Courage?"

But he did not answer.

Chapter VI THE NON COMMERCIAL

Rearden pressed his forehead to the mirror and tried not to thir

That was the only way he could go through with it, he to himself He concentrated on the relief of the mirror's cooli touch, wondering how one went about forcing one's mind ir blankness, particularly after a lifetime lived on the axiom that t constant, clearest, most ruthless function of his rational faculty w his foremost duty He wondered why no effort had ever seem

me, as he attended to every duty on his overloaded schedule hen, during three months of eighteen-hour workdays, he had forotten it happily—until half an hour ago, when, long past dinner me, his secretary had entered his office and said firmly, "Your arty, Mr Rearden" He had cried, "Good God! leaping to his et' he had hurried home, rushed up the st...

[illegible]

nown that business was regarded as some sort of secret, shameful ... people ... never ... sensi- ... hands efore coming home, so one was supposed to wash the stain of business off one's mind before entering a drawing room He had never held that creed, but he had accepted it as natural that his family should hold it He took it for granted—wordlessly, in the manner of a feeling absorbed in childhood, left unquestioned and unnamed—that he had dedicated himself, like the martyr of some dark religion, to the service of a faith which was his passionate love, but which made him an outcast among men, whose sympathy he was not to expect.

He had accepted the tenet that it was his duty to give his wife some form of existence unrelated to business But he had never found the capacity to do it or even to experience a sense of guilt. He could neither force himself to change nor blame her if she chose to condemn him.

He had given Lillian none of his time for months—no, he thought, for years; for the eight years of their marriage. He had no interest to spare for her interests, not even enough to learn just what they were. She had a large circle of friends, and he had heard it said that their names represented the heart of the country's culture, but he had never had time to meet them or even to acknowledge their fame by knowing what achievements had earned it He knew only that he often saw their names on the magazine covers on newsstands. If Lill...

[illegible]

to effect. . . Just a few more minutes, he thought, against the mirror, his eyes closed.

He could not stop ... in his mind that went on words at him it was ... plug a broken

bare hands Stinging jets, part words, part pictures, kept shooting at his brain. Hours of it, he thought, hours to spend watching the eyes of the guests getting heavy with boredom if they were sober or glazing into an imbecile stare if they weren't and pretend that he *noticed neither*, and strain to think of something to say to them, when he had nothing to say—while he needed hours of inquiry *to find* a successor for the superintendent of his rolling mills who had resigned suddenly, without explanation—he had to do it *at once*—men of that sort were so hard to find—and if anything happened to break the flow of the rolling mills—it was the Taggart rail that was being rolled He remembered the silent reproach *the look* of accusation, long bearing patience and scorn, which he always saw in the eyes of his family when they caught some evidence of his passion for his business—and the futility of his silence, of *his* hope that they would not think Rearden Steel meant as much to him as it did—like a drunkard pretending indifference to liquor, among people who watch him with the scornful amusement of their full knowledge of his shameful weakness.

"I heard you last night coming home at two in the morning, where were you?" *his mother* saying to him at the dinner table and Lillian answering "Why, at the mills of course," as another wife would say, "*At the corner saloon*" Or Lillian asking him the hint of a wise half-smile on her face, "What were you doing [illegible]

[illegible]

think he had attended some sort of obscene stag party [illegible] ore carrier had *gone down* in a storm on Lake Michigan with thousands of tons of Rearden ore—those boats were falling apart if he didn't take it *upon himself* to help them obtain the replacements they needed, the owners of the line would go bankrupt, and there was no other line left in operation on Lake Michigan.

"That nook?" said *Lillian*, pointing to an arrangement of settees and coffee tables in their drawing room "Why, no, Henry, it's not new, but I suppose I should feel flattered that three weeks is all it took you to notice *it*. It's my own adaptation of the morning room of a famous French palace—but things like that can't possibly interest you, darling, there's no stock market quotation on them, none whatever" The order for copper, which he had placed six months ago, had not been delivered, the promised date had been postponed three times—"[illegible]

[illegible] a speech he was making to some [illegible] of their mothers about some organization he had joined, but there was something *that sugg*[illegible] loose muscles of his face when [illegible] this, it's not business Henry, [illegible] non-commercial endeavor" [illegible] in Detroit, who [illegible] the job of rebuilding a large factory, was considering structural shapes of Rearden Metal—he should fly to Detroit and speak to

him in person—he should have done it a week ago—he could have done it tonight. . . . "You're not listening," said his mother at the breakfast table, when his mind wandered to the current coal price index, while she was telling him about the dream she'd had last night. "You've never listened to a living soul. You're not interested in anything but yourself. You don't give a damn about

He shook his head violently, opening his eyes, stepping back

iand reaching,
nail picked as
time to read
pocket on his

oor It was an
ed angry slash in
re tunity" He had

that the party had started and that he would face the bitter, reproachful glances of his family when he came down.

The editorial said that at a time of dwindling production, shrinking markets and vanishing opportunities to make a living it was unfair to let one man hoard several business enterprises, while others had none, it was destructive to let a few corner all the resources, leaving others no chance, competition was essential to society, and it was society's duty to see that no competitor ever rose beyond the range of anybody who wanted to compete with him. The editorial predicted the passage of a bill which had been proposed, a bill forbidding any person or corporation to own more than one business concern.

Wesley Mouch, his Washington man, had told Rearden not to worry; the fight would be ... the bill would be defeat... He left it ... skim throug... ecks which Mouch requested for the battle.

Rearden ... could pass. He was incapable ... metals, ... viction ... insane—

... had to seek that which was right ... answer always won—that the senseless, the wrong the ... must could not work, could not succeed, could do nothi

formulas of numerology

He had told himself that the issue was dangerous But the loude screaming of the most hysterical editorial roused no emotion i him—while a variation of a decimal point in a laboratory repo on a test of Rearden Metal made him leap to his feet in eagerne or apprehension He had no energy to spare for anything else.

He crumpled the editorial and threw it into the wastebasket. H felt the leaden approach of that exhaustion which he never felt his job the exhaustion that seemed to wait for him and cat him the moment he turned to other concerns He felt as if he we incapable of any desire except a desperate longing for sleep

He told himself that he had to attend the party—that his fami had the right to demand it of him—that he had to learn to li their kind of pleasure for their sake not his own

He wondered why this was a motive that had no power to imp him Throughout his life whenever he became convinced that course of action was right the desire to follow it had come au matically What was happening to him?—he wondered The i possible conflict of feeling reluctance to do that which was right wasn t it the basic formula of moral corruption? To recognize on guilt yet feel nothing but the coldest most profound indifferer —wasn t it a betrayal of that which had been the motor of life-course and of his pride?

He gave himself no time to seek an answer He finished dressi quickly pitilessly

Holding himself erect, his tall figure moving with the unstress unhurried confidence of habitual authority, the white of a f handkerchief in the breast pocket of his black dinner jacket walked slowly down the stairs to the drawing room looking— the satisfaction of the dowagers who watched him—like the perf figure of a great industrialist.

He saw Lillian at the foot of the stairs The patrician lines o lemon yellow Empire evening gown stressed her graceful body she stood like a person proudly in control of her proper backgrou He smiled he liked to see her happy, it gave some reasonable ju fication to the party

He approached her—and stopped She had always shown g taste in her use of jewelry never wearing too much of it But night she wore an ostentatious display a diamond necklace, earri rings and brooches Her arms looked conspicuously bare by c trast. On her right wrist as sole ornament she wore the brac of Rearden Metal The glittering gems made it look like an ugly pi of dime-store jewelry

When he moved his glance from her wrist to her face, he fo her looking at him Her eyes were narrowed and he could define their expression It was a look that seemed both veiled purposeful the look of something hidden that flaunted its sec from detection.

He wanted to tear the bracelet off her wrist Instead, in obedience [to] her voice gaily pronouncing an introduction, he bowed to the [do]wager who stood beside her, his face expressionless.

"Man? What is man? He's just a collection of chemicals with [il]lusions of grandeur," said Dr Pritchett to a group of guests across [th]e room.

Dr Pritchett picked a canape off a crystal dish, held it speared [b]etween two straight fingers and deposited it whole into his mouth

"Man's metaphysical pretensions," he said, "are preposterous A [m]iserable bit of protoplasm, full of ugly little concepts and mean [illegible] know,

[illegible] ked

[illegible]

"None," said Dr. Pritchett. "None within the range of man's [cap]acity"

A young man asked hesitantly, "But if we haven't any good con[cep]ts, how do we know that the ones we've got are ugly? I mean, [by] what *standard?*"

"There aren't any standards"

This silenced his audience

"The philosophers of the past were superficial," Dr Pritchett [wen]t on. "It remained for our century to redefine the purpose of [phi]losophy The purpose of philosophy is not to help men find the [me]aning of life, but to prove to them that there isn't any"

An attractive young woman, whose father owned a coal mine, [as]ked indignantly, "Who can tell us that?"

"I am trying to," said Dr Pritchett. For the last three years, he [ha]d been head of the Department of Philosophy at the Patrick [He]nry University.

Lillian Rearden approached, her jewels glittering under the [lig]hts. The expression on her face was held to the soft hint of a [sm]ile, set and faintly suggested, like the waves of her hair

"It is this insistence of man upon meaning that makes him so [dif]ficult," said Dr. Pritchett. "Once he realizes that he is of no [im]portance whatever in the vast scheme of the universe, that no [po]ssible significance can be attached to his activities, that it does [no]t matter whether he lives or dies, he will become much more . . . [tr]actable."

He shrugged and reached for another canapé A businessman [sa]id uneasily, "What I asked you about, Professor, was what you [th]ought about the Equalization of Opportunity Bill"

"Oh, that?" said Dr Pritchett. "But I believe I made it clear [th]at I am in favor of it, because I am in favor of a free economy [A] free economy cannot exist without competition. Therefore men [mu]st be forced to compete. Therefore, we must control men in order [t]o force them to be free."

"But, look . . . isn't that sort of a contradiction?"

"Not in the higher philosophical sense You must learn to [be]yond the static definitions of old fashioned thinking [st]atic in the universe. Everything is fluid"

"But it stands to reason that if—"

"Reason my dear fellow is the most naïve of all superstitions. That at least has been generally conceded in our age"

"But I don't quite understand how we can—"

'You suffer from the popular delusion of believing that things can be understood You do not grasp the fact that the universe is a solid contradiction '

A contradiction of what?" asked the matron.

"Of itself"

"How how's that?'

"My dear madam the duty of thinkers is not to explain, but to demonstrate that nothing can be explained"

"Yes of course only "

"The purpose of philosophy is not to seek knowledge, but to prove that knowledge is impossible to man"

"But when we prove it,' asked the young woman, "what's going to be left?"

Instinct" said Dr Pritchett reverently

At the other end of the room, a group was listening to Balph Eubank He sat upright on the edge of an armchair, in order to counteract the appearance of his face and figure, which had tendency to spread if relaxed

'The literature of the past,' said Balph Eubank, "was a shallow fraud It whitewashed life in order to please the money tycoons whom it served Morality, free will, achievement, happy endings and man as some sort of heroic being—all that stuff is laughable to us Our age has given depth to literature for the first time, exposing the real essence of life"

A very young girl in a white evening gown asked timidly, "What is the real essence of life, Mr Eubank?'

"Suffering said Balph Eubank "Defeat and suffering"

"But but why? People are happy . . . sometimes . . . are they?"

"Th [illegible] notions are superficial"

[illegible] who had inherited an

re[illegible] ve do to raise the peop

lit[illegible]

"That is a great social problem," said Balph Eubank He [illegible]

[illegible] but had never writte

[illegible] copies 'Personally

[illegible] Bill applying to lit

[illegible] you approve of that Bill for industry? I'm not su[illegible] know what to think of it"

"Certainly I approve of it Our culture has sunk into a bo[illegible] materialism. Men have lost all spiritual values in their pursu[illegible] material production and technological trickery They're too c[illegible]fortable They will return to a nobler life if we teach them to [illegible] privations So we ought to place a limit upon their material gre[illegible]

"I hadn't thought of it that way," said the woman apologetic[illegible]

"But how are you going to work an Equalization of Opport[illegible]

for literature, Ralph?" asked Mort Liddy "That's a new one me."

My name is Balph," said Eubank angrily "And it's a new one you because it's my own idea"

Okay, okay, I'm not quarreling, am I? I'm just asking" Mort dy smiled He spent most of his time smiling nervously He was a nposer who wrote old fashioned scores for motion pictures, and dern symphonies for sparse audiences

It would work very simply," said Balph Eubank "There should a law limiting the sale of any book to ten thousand copies s would throw the literary market open to new talent, fresh as and non-commercial writing If people were forbidden to buy nillion copies of the same piece of trash, they would be forced buy better books"

You've got something there," said Mort Liddy "But wouldn't e kinda tough on the writers' bank accounts?

So much the better Only those whose motive is not money-king should be allowed to write"

'But, Mr Eubank, asked the young girl in the white dress, hat if more than ten thousand people want to buy a certain ok?"

'Ten thousand readers is enough for any book"

want it?"

said Balph Eubank ntemptuously

Dr Pritchett, on his way across the room to the bar stopped to , "Quite so Just as logic is a primitive vulgarity in philosophy"

'Just as melody is a primitive vulgarity in music, said Mort ldy

"What's all this noise?" asked Lillian Rearden glittering to a p beside them.

"Lillian, my angel," Balph Eubank drawled, "did I tell you that n dedicating my new novel to you?"

"Why, thank you, darling"

"What is the name of your new novel?" asked the wealthy woman.

"*The Heart Is a Milkman*"

"What is it about?"

"Frustration"

"But, Mr Eubank," asked the young girl in the white dress, ushing desperately, "if everything is frustration what is there live for?"

"Brother love," said Balph Eubank grimly

Bertram Scudder stood slouched against the bar His long thin ce looked as if it had shrunk inward, with the exception of his outh and eyeballs, which were left to protrude as three soft ubes. He was

d writ

Bertra

ward t

drink noticed the empty glass in front of Philip Rearden, who stood beside him and jerked his thumb in a silent command to the bartender He ignored the empty glass in front of Betty Pope, who stood at Philip s other side

"Look bud said Bertram Scudder his eyeballs focused approxi ma ely in the direction of Philip 'whether you like it or not the Equalization of Opportunity Bill represents a great step forward."

"What made you think that I did not like it, Mr Scudder?" Philip asked humbly

"Well it s going to pinch isn t it? The long arm of society is going to trim a little off the hors d oeuvres bill around here He waved his hand at the bar

"Why do you assume that I object to that?"

"You don't? Bertram Scudder asked without curiosity

"I dont! said Philip hotly 'I have always placed the publi

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on

tic

Some people do take moral issues seriously, Mr Scudder," sai Philip with a gentle stress of pride in his voice

"What s he talking about Philip?" asked Betty Pope 'We don know anybody who owns more than one business do we?"

"Oh p pe down! said Bertram Scudder his voice bored

"I don't see why there s so much fuss about that Equalization Opportunity B ll" said Betty Pope aggressively, in the tone of

businessmen object to it I

lse is poor, they won't ha

stop being selfish and sha

ave a chance to work ha

and produce some more"

"I do not see why industrialists should be considered at all" sa Scudder "When the masses are destitute and yet there are goo available it s idiotic to expect people to be stopped by some scr of paper called a property deed Property rights are a superstitic One holds property only by the courtesy of those who do not se it The people can seize it at any moment. If they can, why should they?"

"They should" said Claude Slagenhop "They need it Need the only cons deration If people are in need we've got to se things first and talk about it afterwards"

Claude Slagenhop had approached and managed to sque himself between Ph lip and Scudder shoving Scudder aside imp ceptibly Slagenhop was not tall or heavy but he had a squa compact bulk and a broken nose He was the president of Frie of Global Progress

"Hunger won t wa t" said Claude Slagenhop "Ideas are just air An empty belly is a solid fact I've said in all my speeches t

not necessary to talk too much Society is suffering for lack of ness opportunities at the moment, so we ve got the right to e such opportunities as exist Right is whatever s good for ety"

without expression.

Oh, dear me!" said Betty Pope, remembering

Hank Rearden stood at a window in a dim recess at the end of drawing room He hoped no one would notice him for a few utes He had just escaped from a middle-aged woman who had n telling him about her psychic experiences He stood looking . Far in the distance, the red glow of Rearden Steel moved in sky He watched it for a moment's relief

oyment.

He looked at the flowers, at the sparks of light on the crystal sses, at the naked arms and shoulders of women There was a cold d outside, sweeping empty stretches of land He saw the thin anches of a tree being twisted, like arms waving in an appeal for p The tree stood against the glow of the mills

He could not name his sudden emotion He had no words to e its cause, its quality, its meaning Some part of it was joy but was solemn like the act of baring one's head—he did not know whom.

When he stepped back into the crowd he was smiling But the ile vanished abruptly, he saw the entrance of a new guest it was gny Taggart.

Lillian moved forward to meet her, studying her with curiosity ey had met before, on infrequent occasions and she found it range to see Dagny Taggart wearing an evening gown It was a ack dress with a bodice that fell as a cape over one arm and oulder, leaving the other bare, the naked shoulder was the gown s ly ornament. Seeing her in the suits she wore one never thought Dagny Taggart s body The black dress seemed excessively re aling—because it was astonishing to discover that the lines of r shoulder were fragile and beautiful and that the diamond nd on the wrist of her naked arm gave her the most feminine of l aspects the look of being chained

"Miss Taggart, it is such a wonderful surprise to see you here" id Lillian Rearden the muscles of her face performing the motions f a smile "I had not really dared to hope that an invitation from e would take you away from your ever so much weightier con erns. Do permit me to feel flattered"

James Taggart had entered with his sister Lillian smiled at him in the manner of a hasty postscript, as if noticing him for the first time

"Hello James Thats your penalty for being popular—one tends to lose sight of you in the surprise of seeing your sister"

"No one can match you in popularity, Lillian,' he answered smiling thinly "nor ever lose sight of you"

"Me? Oh but I am quite resigned to taking second place in the shadow of my husband I am humbly aware that the wife of a great man has to be contented with reflected glory—don't you think so Miss Taggart?

No said Dagny "I dont."

'Is this a compliment or a reproach, Miss Taggart? But do forgive me if I confess Im helpless Whom may I present to you? I'm afraid I have nothing but writers and artists to offer, and they wouldn't interest you Im sure"

"Id like to find Hank and say hello to him"

"But of course James, do you remember you said you want to meet Balph Eubank?—oh yes, he s here—I'll tell him that I hea you rave about his last novel at Mrs Whitcomb s dinner!

Walking across the room Dagny wondered why she had sa that she wanted to find Hank Rearden, what had prevented her from admitting that she had seen him the moment she entered

Rearden stood at the other end of the long room looking at h He watched her as she approached, but he did not step forw to meet her

"Hello Hank"

"Good evening"

He bowed courteously, impersonally, the movement of his bo matching the distinguished formality of his clothes He did smile

"Thank you for inviting me tonight" she said gaily.

"I cannot claim that I knew you were coming'

"Oh? Then Im glad that Mrs Rearden thought of me I wa to make an exception"

"A— —"

di

The formality of his manner was so unexpected that she unable to adjust to it "I wanted to celebrate" she said

"To celebrate my wedding anniversary?"

"Oh, is it your wedding anniversary? I didn t know My congr lations Hank"

"What did you wish to celebrate?"

"I thought Id permit myself a rest A celebration of my own your honor and mine '

"For what reason?

She was thinking of the new track on the rocky grades of Colorado mountains growing slowly toward the distant goa the Wyatt oil fields She was seeing the greenish blue glow of

als on the frozen ground, among the dried weeds, the naked oulders, the rotting shanties of half-starved settlements.

"In honor of the first sixty miles of Rearden Metal track," she nswered.

"I appreciate it." The tone of his voice was the one that would ave been proper if he had said, 'I've never heard of it"

She found nothing else to say She felt as if she were speaking o a stranger.

"Why, Miss Taggart!' a cheerful voice broke their silence "Now his is what I mean when I say that Hank Rearden can achieve any miracle!"

A businessman whom they knew had approached, smiling at her n delighted astonishment. The three of them had often held emergency conferences about freight rates and steel deliveries Now he looked at her, his face an open comment on the change in her appearance, the change, she thought, which Rearden had not noticed.

She laughed, answering the man's greeting giving herself no time to recognize the unexpected stab of disappointment the unadmitted thought that she wished she had seen this look on Rearden's face, instead. She exchanged a few sentences with the man. When she glanced around, Rearden was gone

"So that is your famous sister?" said Balph Eubank to James Taggart, looking at Dagny across the room

"I was not aware that my sister was famous," said Taggart, a faint bite in his voice

"But, my good man she's an unusual phenomenon in the field of economics, so you must expect people to talk about her Your sister is a symptom of the illness of our century A decadent product f the machine age Machines have destroyed man s humanity, taken im away from the soil, robbed him of his natural arts killed his oul and turned h m [illegible]

[illegible]

pproach.

"Say, Hank Rearden, you're not such a bad fellow at all when een close up in the lion s own den You ought to give us a press conference once in a while, you d win us over"

Rearden turned and looked at the speaker incredulously It was a young newspaperman of the seedier sort who worked on a radical tabloid. The offensive familiarity of his manner seemed to imply that he chose to be rude to Rearden because he knew that Rearden should never have permitted himself to associate with a man of his kind.

Rearden would not have allowed him inside the mills but the man was Lillian s guest, he controlled himself he asked dryly [illegible] you want?"

"You're not so bad You've got talent. Technological of course, I don't agree with you about Rearden Metal

"I haven't asked you to agree."

"Well, Bertram Scudder said that your policy—" the man started belligerently, pointing toward the bar, but stopped, as if he had slid farther than he intended

Rearden looked at the untidy figure slouched against the bar Lillian had introduced them, but he had paid no attention to the name He turned sharply and walked off, in a manner that forbade the young bum to tag him

Lillian glanced up at his face, when Rearden approached her in the midst of a group, and, without a word, stepped aside where they could not be heard

"Is that Scudder of *The Future?*" he asked, pointing.

"Why, yes"

He looked at her silently, unable to begin to believe it, unable to find the lead of a thought with which to begin to understand. Her eyes were watching him

'How could you invite him here?" he asked

"Now, Henry, don't let's be ridiculous You don't want to be narrow minded, do you? You must learn to tolerate the opinion of others and respect their right of free speech"

'In my house?'

"Oh, don't be stuffy!"

He did not speak, because his consciousness was held, not b coherent statements, but by two pictures that seemed to glare a him insistently He saw the article, "The Octopus," by Bertran Scudder, which was not an expression of ideas, but a bucket c slime emptied in public—an article that did not contain a singl fact, not even an invented one, but poured a stream of sneers an adjectives in which nothing was clear except the filthy malice c denouncing without considering proof necessary And he saw th lines of Lillian s profile, the proud purity which he had sought i marrying her

When he noticed her again, he realized that the vision of h profile was in his own mind, because she was turned to him ful face watching him In the sudden instant of returning to realit he thought that what he saw in her eyes was enjoyment But i the next instant he reminded himself that he was sane and that th was not possible

"It s the first time you've invited that . . ." he used an obsce word with unemotional precision, "to my house It's the last"

"How dare you use such—"

"Don't argue, Lillian. If you do, I'll throw him out right now"

He gave her a moment to answer, to object, to scream at him she wished She remained silent, not looking at him, only h smooth cheeks seemed faintly drawn inward, as if deflated

Moving blindly away through the coils of lights, voices a perfume, he felt a cold touch of dread. He knew that he shou think of Lillian and find the answer to the riddle of her characte because this was a revelation which he could not ignore, but did not think of her—and he felt the dread because he knew th the answer had ceased to matter to him long ago.

The flood of weariness was starting to rise again He felt as if could almost see it in thickening waves it was not within him, t outside, spreading through the room For an instant, he felt as he were alone, lost in a gray desert, needing help and knowing at no help would come

He stopped short. In the lighted doorway, the length of the om between them, he saw the tall, arrogant figure of a man who d paused for a moment before entering He had never met the an, but of all the notorious faces that cluttered the pages of ewspapers, this was the one he despised It was Francisco Anconia.

Rearden had never given much thought to men like Bertram udder But with every hour of his life, with the strain and the ide of every moment when his muscles or his mind had ached om effort, with every step he had taken to rise out of the mines Minnesota and to turn his effort into gold, with all of his pro und respect for money and for its meaning he despised the uanderer who did not know how to deserve the great gift of herited wealth. There, he thought, was the most contemptible presentative of the species

He saw Francisco d Anconia enter, bow to Lillian then walk ito the crowd as if he owned the room which he had never tered before Heads turned to watch him, as if he pulled them n strings in his wake

Approaching Lillian once more Rearden said without anger, e contempt becoming amusement in his voice, "I didn t know ou knew that one"

"I've met him at a few parties"

"Is he one of your friends, too?"

"Certainly not!" The sharp resentment was genuine

"Then why did you invite him?

"Well, you can t give a party—not a party that counts—while es in this country, without inviting him It s a nuisance if he omes and a social black mark if he doesn t"

Rearden laughed She was off guard she did not usually admit hings of this kind "Look," he said wearily I don t want to spoil our party But keep that man away from me Don't come around [illegible] w

[illegible] d

[illegible] d

[illegible] in

[illegible] erate emphasis of what he understood and did not choose to knowledge She turned away She hoped to avoid him for the rest of the evening

Balph Eubank had joined the group around Dr Pritchett and was saying sullenly, " no you cannot expect people to under stand the higher reaches of philosophy Culture should be taken out of the hands of the dollar-chasers We need a national subsidy for literature It is disgraceful that artists are treated like peddlers and that art works have to be sold like soap"

"You mean, your complaint is that they *don't* sell like soap?" asked Francisco d'Anconia.

They had not noticed him approach; the conversation stopped as if slashed off; most of them had never met him, but they al recognized him at once.

"I meant—" Balph Eubank started angrily and closed his mouth he saw the eager interest on the faces of his audience, but it wa not interest in philosophy any longer.

"Why, hello, Professor!" said Francisco, bowing to Dr. Pritchet

There was no pleasure in Dr. Pritchett's face when he answere the greeting and performed a few introductions.

"We were just discussing a most interesting subject," said th earnest matron. "Dr. Pritchett was telling us that nothing is an thing."

"He should, undoubtedly, know more than anyone else abo that," Francisco answered gravely.

"I wouldn't have supposed that you knew Dr. Pritchett so well, Señor d'Anconia," she said, and wondered why the professor looked displeased by her remark.

"[illegible] tchett a [illegible] one of [illegible]"

"[illegible]" the attractive young woman gasped. "But you couldn't have, Señor d'Anconia! You're not old enough. I thought [illegible] f the last century."

[illegible]

"Then why don't we ever hear about him any more?"

"He retired, nine years ago."

"Isn't it odd? When a politician or a movie star retires, we read front page stories about it. But when a philosopher retires, people do not even notice it."

"They do, eventually."

A young man said, astonished, "I thought Hugh Akston was one of those classics that nobody studied any more, except in historie of philosophy. I read an article recently which referred to him a the last of the great advocates of reason."

"Just what did Hugh Akston teach?" asked the earnest matron.

Francisco answered, "He taught that everything is something."

"Your loyalty to your teacher is laudable, Señor d'Anconia," said Dr. Pritchett dryly. "May we take it that you are an exampl of the practical results of *his teaching?*"

"I am."

James Taggart had approached the group and was waiting to b noticed.

"Hello, Francisco."

"Good evening, James."

"What a wonderful coincidence, seeing you here! I've been ver anxious to speak to you."

"That's new. You haven't always been."

"Now you're joking just like in the old days" Taggart was moving vly as if casually away from the group hoping to draw Fran o after him You know that there s not a person in this room) wouldn t love to talk to you

Really? I d be inclined to suspect the opposite" Francisco followed obediently, but stopped within hearing distance of others

I have tried in every possible way to get in touch with you" I Taggart, "but but circumstances didn t permit me to ceed."

Are you trying to hide from me the fact that I refused to you?"

Well that is I mean why did you refuse?"

I couldn't imagine what you wanted to speak to me about"

The San Sebastián Mines of course!" Taggart s voice rose a e

Why, what about them?"

But Now look Francisco this is serious It s a disaster unprecedented disaster—and nobody can make any sense out of I don't know what to think. I don t understand it at all I have ight to know"

'A right? Aren t you being old fashioned James? But what is it I want to know?

Well first of all that nationalization—what are you going to about it?

'Nothing"

'Nothing?!"

'But surely you don't want me to do anything about it My es and your railroad were seized by the will of the people u wouldn t want me to oppose the will of the people would i?"

'Francisco this is not a laughing matter!'

'I never thought it was"

ders an worth sort of

Why

he said, "I thought you would approve of it

'Approve?!"

'I thought yo [illegible] he

ht

ir

ties.

"What are you talking about?"

Francisco shook his head regretfully "I don't know why you ould call my behavior rotten I thought you would recogn ze t an honest effort to practice what the whole world is preach ng esn't everyone bel eve that it is evil to be selfish? I was totally less in regard to the San Sebastian project Isn t it evil to

pursue a personal interest? I had no personal interest in it whatever Isn't it evil to work for profit? I did not work for profit—I took a loss Doesn t everyone agree that the purpose and justification of an industrial enterprise are not production, but the livelihood of its employees? The San Sebastián mines were the most eminently successful venture in industrial history they produced no copper but they provided a livelihood for thousands of men who could not have achieved in a lifetime, the equivalent of what they got for one day's work which they could not do Isn t it generally agreed that an owner is a parasite and an exploiter, that it is the employees who do all the work and make the product possible? I did not exploit anyone I did not burden the San Sebastián Mines with my useless presence I left them in the hands of the men who count I did not pass judgment on the value of that property I turned it over to a mining specialist He was not a very good specialist but he needed the job very badly Isn't it generally conceded that when you hire a man for a job, it is his need that counts, not his ability? Doesn t everyone believe that in order to get the goods, all you have to do is need them? I have carried out every moral precept of our age I expected gratitude and a citation of honor I do not understand why I am being damned"

In the silence of those who had listened, the sole comment was the shrill sudden giggle of Betty Pope she had understood nothing but she saw the look of helpless fury on James Taggart's face.

People were looking at Taggart, expecting an answer They were indifferent to the issue they were merely amused by the spectacle of someone s embarrassment Taggart achieved a patronizing smile.

"You don t expect me to take this seriously? he asked.

"There was a time Francisco answered 'when I did not believe that anyone could take it seriously I was wrong'

"This is outrageous' Taggart s voice started to rise "It's perfectly outrageous to treat your public responsibilities with such thoughtless levity!" He turned to hurry away

Francisco shrugged spreading his hands 'You see? I didn't think you wanted to speak to me"

Rearden stood alone far at the other end of the room Philip noticed him approached and waved to Lillian calling her over

"Lillian, I don t think that Henry is having a good time," he said, smiling one could not tell whether the mockery of his smile was directed at Lillian or at Rearden. "Can t we do something about it?"

"Oh [illegible]

[illegible] illian "I've [illegible] nly serious [illegible] wanted to [illegible] would you suggest?

"Oh I don t know! But he shouldn t be standing around all by himself"

"Drop it" said Rearden While thinking dimly that he did not want to hurt their feelings, he could not prevent himself from

ling, "You don't know how hard I've tried to be left standing by myself"

"There—you see?" Lillian smiled at Philip "To enjoy life and ple is not so simple as pouring a ton of steel Intellectual pursuits not learned in the market place"

Philip chuckled. "It s not intellectual pursuits I m worried about w sure are you about that Puritan stuff, Lillian? If I were you, wouldn t leave him free to look around There are too many autiful women here tonight"

— Philip

'ly, for

you're

ing?"

the crowd, she realized the contrast for the first time The faces f the others looked like aggregates of interchangeable features,

ight.

Her eyes kept returning to him involuntarily She never caught him glancing in her direction She could not believe that he was avoiding her intentionally, there could be no possible reason for it; yet she felt certain that he was She wanted to approach him and convince herself that she was mistaken. Something stopped her; she could not understand her own reluctance

Rearden bore patiently a conversation with his mother and two ladies whom she wished him to entertain with stories of his youth and his struggle He complied telling himself that she was proud of him in her own way But he felt as if something in her manner kept suggesting that she had nursed him through his struggle and that she was the source of his success He was glad when she let him go Then he escaped once more to the recess of the window

He stood there for a while, leaning on a sense of privacy as if it were a physical support.

"Mr Rearden," said a strangely quiet voice beside him "permit me to introduce myself My name is d Anconia"

Rearden turned, startled, d Anconia s manner and voice had a quality he had seldom encountered before a tone of authentic respect.

"How do you do" he answered His voice was brusque and dry, but he had answered

"I have observed that Mrs Rearden has been trying to avoid the necessity of presenting me to you and I can guess the reason. Would you prefer that I leave your house?"

The action of naming an issue instead of evading it was so unlike the usual behavior of all the men he knew it was such a sudden, startling relief that Rearden remained silent for a moment, studying d Anconia s face Francisco had said it very simply, neither as a reproach nor a plea but in a manner which, strangely, acknowledged Rearden s dignity and his own

"No said Rearden, "whatever else you guessed I did not say that "

"Thank you In that case you will allow me to speak to you."

"Why should you wish to speak to me?"

"My motives cannot interest you at present '

"Mine is not the sort of conversation that could interest you at all "

"You are mistaken about one of us Mr Rearden or both. I came to this party solely in order to meet you

There had been a faint tone of amusement in Rearden s voice' now it hardened into a hint of contempt You started by playing it straight Stick to it "

"I am."

'What did you want to meet me for? In order to make me lose money?"

Francisco looked straight at him "Yes—eventually "

"What is it, this time? A gold mine?"

Francisco shook his head slowly the conscious deliberation of the movement gave it an air that was almost sadness No " he said "I don't want to sell you anything As a matter of fact I did not attempt to sell the copper mine to James Taggart either He came to me for it You won t "

Rearden chuckled If you understand that much we have at least a sensible basis for conversation Proceed on that If you don't have some fancy investment in mind what did you want to meet me for?"

In order to become acquainted with you "

"That's not an answer It s just another way of saying the same thing "

"Not quite Mr Rearden "

"Unless you mean—in order to gain my confidence?"

"No I don t like people who speak or think in terms of gaining anybody's confidence If one s actions are honest, one does not need the predated confidence of others only their rational perception The person who craves a moral blank check of that kind, has dishonest intentions whether he admits it to himself or not "

Rearden s startled glance at him was like the involuntary thrust of a hand grasping for support in a desperate need The glance betrayed how much he wanted to find the sort of man he thought he was seeing Then Rearden lowered his eyes almost closing them slowly shutting out the vision and the need His face was hard it had an express on of severity an inner severity directed at h mself It looked austere and lonely

"All right," he said tonelessly What do you want if it s not my confidence?"

"I want to learn to understand you"
"What for?"
"For a reason of my own which need not concern you at present"
"What do you want to understand about me?"

Francisco looked silently out at the darkness The fire of the ills was dying down. There was only a faint tinge of red left on edge of the earth, just enough to outline the scraps of clouds ped by the tortured battle of the storm in the sky Dim shapes pt sweeping through space and vanishing, shapes which were anches, but looked as if they were the fury of the wind made ible.

"It's a terrible night for any animal caught unprotected on that ain," said Francisco d Anconia. "This is when one should appreciate the meaning of being a man"

Rearden did not answer for a moment, then he said, as if in swer to himself, a tone of wonder in his voice, "Funny . . ."

"What?"

"You told me what I was thinking just a while ago . . ."

"You were?"

". . . only I didn't have the words for it."

"Shall I tell you the rest of the words?"

"Go ahead"

"You stood here and watched the storm with the greatest pride ne can ever feel—because you are able to have summer flowers nd half naked women in your house on a night like this, in emonstration of your victory over that storm. And if it weren't or you, most of those who are here would be left helpless at the nercy of that wind in the middle of some such plain"

"How did you know that?"

In time with his question, Rearden realized that it was not his houghts this man had named, but his most hidden, most personal motion and that he, who would never confess his emotions to nyone, had confessed it in his question He saw the faintest flicker n Francisco's eyes, as of a smile or a check mark

"What would *you* know about a pride of that kind?" Rearden sked sharply, as if the contempt of the second question could rase the confidence of the first.

"That is what I felt once, when I was young"

[illegible] nockery nor self pity [illegible] and the clear, blue [illegible] open offered to any [illegible]

"Why do you want to talk about it?' Rearden asked, prompted by a moment s reluctant compassion

"Let us say—by way of gratitude, Mr Rearden."

"Gratitude to me?"

"If you will accept it"

Rearden's voice hardened. "I haven't asked for gratitude I don't need it."

"I have not said you needed it But of all those whom you are saving from the storm tonight, I am the only one who will offer it."

After a moment's silence, Rearden asked, his voice low with a sound which was almost a threat, What are you trying to do?'

'I am calling your attention to the nature of those for whom you are working '

It would take a man who's never done an honest day's work in his life to think or say that" The contempt in Reardens voice had a note of relief he had been disarmed by a doubt of his judgment on the character of his adversary, now he felt certain once more "You wouldnt understand it if I told you that the man who works works for himself, even if he does carry the whole wretched bunch of you along Now *I'll* guess what you're thinking go ahead say that its evil, that I'm selfish conceited, heartless, cruel I am. dont want any part of that tripe about working for others I'm not.

For the first time he saw the look of a personal reaction i

"Because they're a bunch of miserable children who struggle t remain alive desperately and very badly, while I—I don't eve notice the burden

"Why dont you tell them that?'

"What?"

"That you're working for your own sake, not theirs"

"They know it"

"Oh yes they know it Every single one of them here knows But they dont think you do And the aim of all their efforts is keep you from knowing it'

"Why should I care what they think?"

"Because its a battle in which one must make one's stand clea

"A battle? What battle? I hold the whip hand I dont fight t disarmed"

"Are they? They have a weapon against you Its their o weapon, but its a terrible one Ask yourself what it is, some time

'Where do you see any evidence of it?"

"In the unforgivable fact that you're as unhappy as you are"

Rearden could accept any form of reproach, abuse, damnati anyone chose to throw at him the only human reaction which would not accept was pity The stab of a coldly rebellious an brought him back to the full context of the moment He spo fighting not to acknowledge the nature of the emotion ris within him "What sort of effrontery are you indulging in? Wh your motive?"

"Let us say—to give you the words you need for the time wl

om

tion. He felt a dim sense of betrayal, the hint of an unkno

anger "Do you expect me to forget what you are?" he asked, knowing that this was what he had forgotten.

"I do not expect you to think of me at all "

you will accept it. " He heard the words and the strangely solemn inflection of the quiet voice and an inexplicable answer of his own, something within him that wanted to cry yes to accept, to tell this man that he accepted, that he needed it—though there was no name for what he needed, it was not gratitude and he knew that it was not gratitude this man had meant

Aloud, he said, "I didn't seek to talk to you But you've asked for it and you're going to hear it. To me there's only one form of human depravity—the man without a purpose "

"That is true."

"I can forgive all those others they're not vicious they're merely helpless But you—you're the kind who can't be forgiven "

"It is against the sin of forgiveness that I wanted to warn you "

"You had the greatest chance in life What have you done with it? If you have the mind to understand all the things you said how can you speak to me at all? How can you face anyone after the sort of irresponsible destruction you've perpetrated in that Mexican business?"

"It is your right to condemn me for it, if you wish "

Dagny stood by the corner of the window recess listening They did not notice her She had seen them together and she had approached, drawn by an impulse she could not explain or resist it seemed crucially important that she know what these two men said to each other

She had heard their last few sentences She had never thought it possible that she would see Francisco taking a beating He could smash any adversary in any form of encounter Yet he stood offering no defense. She knew that it was not indifference she knew his face well enough to see the effort his calm cost him—she saw the faint line of a muscle pulled tight across his cheek

"Of all those who live by the ability of others," said Rearden "you're the one real parasite "

"I have given you grounds to think so "

"Then what right have you to talk about the meaning of being a man? You're the one who has betrayed it "

"I am sorry if I have offended you by what you may rightly consider as a presumption "

Francisco bowed and turned to go Rearden said involuntarily, not knowing that the question negated his anger that it was a plea to stop this man and hold him, "What did you want to learn to understand about me?"

Francisco turned The expression of his face had not changed it was still a look of gravely courteous respect. "I he answered.

Rearden stood watching him as he walked off into the crowd. The figures of a butler with a crystal dish, and of Dr Pritchett, stooping to choose another canapé hid Francisco from sight. Rearden glanced out at the darkness, nothing could be seen there but the wind

Dagny stepped forward. when he came out of the recess she smiled openly inviting conversation He stopped It seemed to her that he had stopped reluctantly She spoke hastily to break the silence "Hank why do you have so many intellectuals of the looter persuasion here? I wouldn t have them in my house"

This was not what she had wanted to say to him But she d d not know what she wanted to say never before had she felt herself left wordless in his presence

She saw his eyes narrowing like a door being closed "I see no reason why one should not invite them to a party," he answered coldly

"Oh I didn't mean to criticize your choice of guests But Well I've been trying not to learn which one of them is Bertram Scudder If I do I'll slap his face" She tried to sound casual I dont want to create a scene but I m not sure I'll be able to control myself I couldn t believe it when somebody told me that Mrs Rearden had invited him"

"I invited him"

"But " Then her voice dropped "Why?"

"I don't attach any importance to occasions of this kind"

"I'm sorry Hank I didn t know you were so tolerant I'm not"

He said nothing

"I know you don't like parties Neither do I But sometimes I wonder perhaps we re the only ones who were meant to be able to enjoy them

"I am afraid I have no talent for it"

"Not for this But do you think any of these people are enjoying it? They're just straining to be more senseless and aimless than usual To be light and unimportant You know I think that only if one feels immensely important can one feel truly light."

"I wouldn't know"

"It s just a thought that disturbs me once in a while thought it about my first ball I keep thinking that parties are intended to be celebrations and celebrations should be only for those who have something to celebrate"

"I have never thought of it"

She could not adapt her words to the rigid formal ty of his manner she could not quite bel eve it They had always been at ease together in his office Now he was like a man in a strait jacket.

"Hank look at it. If you didn t know any of these people wouldn t it seem beaut ful? The lights and the clothes and all the imagination that went to make it poss ble " She was looking at the room She d d not notice that he had not followed her glance He was looking down at the shadows on her naked shoulder soft blue shadows made by the l ght that fell through the strands

her hair "Why have we left it all to fools? It should have been us."

"In what manner?"

"I don't know . I've always expected parties to be exciting and brilliant, like some rare drink." She laughed there was a note of sadness in it. "But I don't drink, either That's just another symbol that doesn't mean what it was intended to mean" He was silent. She added, "Perhaps there's something that we have missed."

"I am not aware of it."

In a flash of sudden, desolate emptiness she was glad that he had not understood or responded feeling dimly that she had revealed too much, yet not knowing what she had revealed She shrugged, the movement running through the curve of her shoulder like a faint convulsion. "It's just an old illusion of mine," she said indifferently "Just a mood that comes once every year or two Let me see the latest steel price index and I'll forget all about it."

She did not know that his eyes were following her, as she walked away from him.

She moved slowly through the room, looking at no one She noticed a small group huddled by the unlighted fireplace The room was not cold, but they sat as if they drew comfort from the thought of a non-existent fire

"I do not know why, but I am growing to be afraid of the dark. No, not now, only when I am alone What frightens me is night. Night as such."

The speaker was an elderly spinster with an air of breeding and hopelessness The three women and two men of the group were well dressed, the skin of their faces was smoothly well tended, but they had a manner of anxious caution that kept their voices one tone lower than normal and blurred the differences of their ages, giving them all the same gray look of being spent It was the look one saw in groups of respectable people everywhere Dagny stopped and listened.

"But, my dear," one of them asked, "why should it frighten you?"

"I don't know," said the spinster "I am not afraid of prowlers or robberies or anything of the sort. But I stay awake all night. I fall asleep only when I see the sky turning pale It is very odd Every evening when it grows dark I get the feeling that this time it is final, that daylight will not return"

"My cousin who lives on the coast of Maine wrote me the same thing," said one of the women

"Last night," said the spinster "I stayed awake because of the shooting There were guns going off all night way out at sea There were no flashes There was nothing Just those detonations at long intervals, somewhere in the fog over the Atlantic"

"I read something about it in the paper this morning Coast Guard target practice"

"Why no" the spinster said indifferently "Everybody down on the shore knows what it was It was Ragnar Danneskjold. It was the Coast Guard trying to catch him."

"Ragnar Danneskjold in Delaware Bay?" a woman gasped.

"Oh yes They say it is not the first time'

"Did they catch him?

"No

'Nobody can catch him said one of the men

"The Peoples State of Norway has offered a million-dollar reward for his head

"Thats an awful lot of money to pay for a pirates head"

"But how are we going to have any order or security or planning in the world w th a pirate running loose all over the seven seas?"

"Do you know what it was that he seized last night?" said the spinster 'The big ship with the relief supplies we were sending to the Peoples State of France"

"How does he dispose of the goods he seizes?"

'Ah that—nobody knows"

"I met a sailor once from a ship he d attacked who d seen him in person. He said that Ragnar Danneskjold has the purest gold hair and the most frightening face on earth a face with no sign of any feeling If there ever was a man born without a heart he s it—the sailor said"

"A nephew of mine saw Ragnar Danneskjolds ship one night, off the coast of Scotland He wrote me that he couldn t believe his eyes It was a better ship than any in the navy of the Peoples State of England"

'They say he hides in one of those Norwegian fjords where neither God nor man will ever find him Thats where the Vikings used to hide in the Middle Ages"

"Theres a reward on his head offered by the Peoples State of Portugal too And by the Peoples State of Turkey"

'They say its a national scandal in Norway He comes from one of their best families The family lost its money generations ago but the name is of the noblest The ruins of their castle are still in existence His father is a bishop His father has disowned him and excommunicated him But it had no effect

"Did you know that Ragnar Danneskjold went to school in this country? Sure The Patrick Henry University

"Not really?"

"Oh yes You can look it up"

"What bothers me is You know I dont like it I don't l'k it that hes now appearing right here in our own waters I though things l'ke that could happen only in the wastelands Only i Europe But a b g scale outlaw of that kind operating in Delawar in our day and age"

"Hes been seen off Nantucket too And at Bar Harbor Th newspapers have been asked not to write about it"

"Why?"

"They don t want people to know that the navy can't cope wit him"

"I dont l ke it. It feels funny Its l ke something out of th Dark Ages"

Dagny glanced up She saw Francisco d'Anconia standing a few ·ps away He was looking at her with a kind of stressed curiosity, ı eyes were mocking

"It's a strange world we're living in," said the spinster, her voice w

"I read an article," said one of the women tonelessly "It said at times of trouble are good for us It is good that people are owing poorer To accept privations is a moral virtue "

"I suppose so," said another, without conviction.

"We must not worry I heard a speech that said it is useless to orry or to blame anyone Nobody can help what he does, that is e way things made him There is nothing we can do about anyng. We must learn to bear it."

"What's the use anyway? What is man's fate? Hasn't it always en to hope, but never to achieve? The wise man is the one who es not attempt to hope "

"That is the right attitude to take."

"I don't know I don't know what is right any more . . . ow can we ever know?"

"Oh well, who is John Galt?"

Dagny turned brusquely and started away from them. One of e women followed her

"But I do know it," said the woman, in the soft, mysterious tone f sharing a secret

"You know what?"

"I know who is John Galt."

"Who?" Dagny asked tensely, stopping

"I know a man who knew John Galt in person. This man is an ld friend of a great aunt of mine He was there and he saw it appen. Do you know the legend of Atlantis, Miss Taggart?"

"What?"

"Atlantis."

"Why . . vaguely"

"The Isles of the Blessed. That is what the Greeks called it, thousands of years ago They said Atlantis was a place where herospirits lived in a happiness unknown to the rest of the earth A place which only the spirits of heroes could enter and they reached it without dying because they carried the secret of life within them. Atlantis was lost to mankind, even then But the Greeks knew that it had existed. They tried to find it Some of them said it was underground, hidden in the heart of the earth But most of them said it was an island A radiant island in the Western Ocean. Perhaps what they were thinking of was America They never found it For centuries afterward men said it was only a legend They did not believe it, but they never stopped looking for it, because they knew that that was what they had to find "

"Well, what about John Galt?"

"He found it."

Dagny's interest was gone "Who was he?"

"John Galt was a millionaire a man of inestimable wealth He was sailing his yacht one night, in mid Atlantic, fighting the worst

storm ever wreaked upon the world, when he found it He saw it i the depth, where it had sunk to escape the reach of men He saw

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was the only one who survived."

"How interesting"

"My friend saw it with his own eyes," said the woman, offended "It happened many years ago But John Galt's family hushed u the story"

"And what happened to his fortune? I don't recall ever hearin of a Galt fortune"

"It went down with him" She added belligerently, "You don have to believe it."

"Miss Taggart doesn't," said Francisco d'Anconia "I do"

They turned He had followed them and he stood looking a them with the insolence of exaggerated earnestness

"Have you ever had faith in anything, Señor d'Anconia?" th woman asked angrily

"No, madame.'

He chuckled at her brusque departure. Dagny asked coldl "What's the joke?"

"The joke's on that fool woman She doesn't know that she w telling you the truth"

"Do you expect me to believe that?"

"No."

"Then what do you find so amusing?"

"Oh, a great many things here Don t you?"

"No"

"Well, *that's* one of the things I find amusing."

"Francisco, will you leave me alone?"

"But I have Didn't you notice that you were first to speak me tonight?"

"Why do you keep watching me?"

"Curiosity"

"About what?"

"You

"Why

"Tha ital

you ar or

woman worth watching here"

She stood defiantly still, because the way he looked at her manded an angry escape. She stood as she always did, straight a taut, her head lifted impatiently It was the unfeminine pose of executive But her naked shoulder betrayed the fragility of the bo under the black dress, and the pose made her most truly a wom The proud *strength* became a challenge to someone's superi strength, and the fragility a reminder that the challenge could broken She was not conscious of it She had met no one able see it.

He said, looking down at her body, 'Dagny, what a magnificent waste!"

She had to turn and escape. She felt herself blushing, for the first time in years blushing because she knew suddenly that the sentence named what she had felt all evening

[illegible] It was a [illegible] ho had [illegible] "That's

I

The great burst of sound was the opening chords of Halley's urth Concerto It rose in tortured triumph speaking its denial pain, its hymn to a distant vision Then the notes broke It was if a handful of mud and pebbles had been flung at the music, d what followed was the sound of the rolling and the dripping was Halley's Concerto swung into a popular tune It was Halley's elody torn apart, its holes stuffed with hiccoughs The great itement of joy had become the giggling of a barroom Yet it was ll the remnant of Halley's melody that gave it form, it was the elody that supported it like a spinal cord

"Pretty good?" Mort Liddy was smiling at his friends, boastlly and nervously "Pretty good, eh? Best movie score of the ar Got me a prize Got me a long term contract. Yeah this is my score for *Heaven's in Your Backyard*

Dagny stood, staring at the room, as if one sense could replace iother, as if sight could wipe out sound. She moved her head in slow circle trying to find an anchor somewhere She saw Fransco leaning against a column, his arms crossed he was looking raight at her; he was laughing

Don't shake like this she thought Get out of here This was the proach of an anger she could not control She thought Say thing Walk steadily Get out

She had started walking cautiously very slowly She heard illian's words and stopped Lillian had said it many times this ening in answer to the same question, but it was the first time that agny heard it.

"This?" Lillian was saying extending her arm with the metal acelet for the inspection of two smartly groomed women "Why, o it's not from a hardware store, it's a very special gift from y husband. Oh, yes of course it's hideous But don't you see? It's pposed to be priceless Of course, I'd exchange it for a common iamond bracelet any time but somehow nobody will offer me one r it, even though it is so very, very valuable Why? My dear it's e first thing ever made of Rearden Metal"

Dagny did not see the room She did not hear the music She lt the pressure of dead stillness against her eardrums She did ot know the moment that preceded, or the moments that were to llow She did not know those involved neither herself nor Lillian, nor Rearden, nor the meaning of her own action It was a ngle instant, blasted out of context She had heard She was looking at the bracelet of green-blue metal

She felt the movement of something being torn off her wrist, and

she heard her own voice saying in the great stillness, very calmly, a voice cold as a skeleton, naked of emotion, "If you are not the coward that I think you are, you will exchange it"

On the palm of her hand, she was extending her diamond bracelet to Lillian.

'You're not serious, Miss Taggart?" said a woman's voice

It was not Lillian's voice Lillian's eyes were looking straight at her She saw them Lillian knew that she was serious

"Give me that bracelet," said Dagny, lifting her palm higher, the diamond band glittering across it.

"This is horrible!' cried some woman It was strange that the cry stood out so sharply Then Dagny realized that there were people standing around them and that they all stood in silence. She was hearing sounds now, even the music; it was Halley's mangled Concerto, somewhere far away

She saw Rearden's face It looked as if something within him [illegible] He was

[illegible]

"Thank you, Miss Taggart," she said.

Dagny's fingers closed about the metal She felt that, she felt nothing else

Lillian turned, because Rearden had approached her He took the diamond bracelet from her hand He clasped it on her wrist, raised her hand to his lips and kissed it

He did not look at Dagny

Lillian laughed, gaily, easily, attractively, bringing the room back to its normal mood

"You may have it back, Miss Taggart, when you change your mind" she said

Dagny had turned away She felt calm and free The pressure was gone The need to get out had vanished

She clasped the metal bracelet on her wrist She liked the feel of the weight against her skin. Inexplicably, she felt a touch of feminine vanity the kind she had never experienced before the desire to be seen wearing this particular ornament.

From a distance, she heard snatches of indignant voices "The [illegible]

[illegible]

He was crossing the room [illegible] by

somec [illegible]

nobo [illegible]

She [illegible]

office [illegible]

[illegible]

to her face, her body was naked but for his metal bracelet.
m sorry, Hank," she said, "but I had to do it"
s eyes remained expressionless Yet she was suddenly certain she knew what he felt he wanted to slap her face
t was not necessary," he answered coldly, and walked on.

* *

was very late when Rearden entered his wife's bedroom. She [illegible]

[illegible] shaded to a tone [illegible]

[illegible] here was a [illegible] d no sign of [illegible] hausted The [illegible] or sleep not be disturbed.

He still wore his dress clothes, his tie was loose and a strand hair hung over his face She glanced at him without astonish nt, as if she knew what the last hour in his room had done to

He looked at her silently He had not entered her room for a g time He stood wishing he had not entered it now

'Isn't it customary to talk, Henry?'

'If you wish"

'I wish you'd send one of your brilliant experts from the mills take a look at our furnace Do you know that it went out ing the party and Simons had a terrible time getting it started ain? . . Mrs Weston says that our best achievement is our ok—she loved the hors d'oeuvres Balph Eubank said a y funny thing about you, he said you're a crusader with a tory's chimney smoke for a plume I'm glad you don't e Francisco d'Anconia I can't stand him"

He did not care to explain his presence, or to disguise defeat or admit it by leaving Suddenly, it did not matter to him what e guessed or felt. He walked to the window and stood looking t.

Why had she married him?—he thought. It was a question he had t asked himself on their wedding day eight years ago Since en, in tortured loneliness, he had asked it many times He had und no answer

It was not for position, he thought, or for money She came om an old family that had both Her family's name was not nong the most distinguished and their fortune was modest but ch were sufficient to let her be included in the top circles of New ork's society, where he had met her Nine years ago he had peared in New York like an explosion, in the glare of the suc ss of Rearden Steel a success that had been thought impossible y the city's experts It was his indifference that made him

lar He did not know that he was expected to attempt to buy his way into society and that they anticipated the pleasure of rejecting him He had no time to notice their disappointment.

He attended r

invited by men

knew, that his c

people who had

that the age of achievement was past

It was Lillian s austerity that attracted him—the conflict between her austerity and her behavior He had never liked anyone or expected to be liked He found himself held by the spectacle of a woman who was obviously pursuing him but with obvious reluctance, as if against her own will, as if fighting a desire she resented. It was she who planned that they should meet, then faced him coldly, as if not caring that he knew it She spoke little, she had an air of mystery that seemed to tell him he would never break through her proud detachment, and an air of amusement, mocking her own desire and his

He had not known many women He had moved toward his goal, sweeping aside everything that did not pertain to it in the world and in himself His dedication to his work was like one of the fires he dealt with, a fire that burned every lesser element, every impurity out of the

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feeling an angry emptiness—because he had sought an act of triumph, though he had not known of what nature, but the response he received was only a woman s acceptance of a casual pleasure and he knew too clearly that what he had won had no meaning He was left, not with a sense of attainment, but with a sense of his own degradation He grew to hate his desire He fought it He came to believe the doctrine that this desire was wholly physical a desire, not of consciousness but of matter, and he rebelled against the thought that his flesh could be free to choose and that its choice was impervious to the will of his mind He had spent his life in mines and mills, shaping matter to his wishes by the power of his brain—and he found it intolerable that he should be unable to control the matter of his own body He fought it He had won his every battle against inanimate nature, but this was a battle he lost.

It was the difficulty of the conquest that made him want Lillian. She seemed to be a woman who expected and deserved a pedestal, this made him want to drag her down to his bed To drag her down, were the words in his mind, they gave him a dark pleasure, the sense of a victory worth winning

He could not understand why—he thought it was an obscene conflict, the sign of some secret depravity within him—why he felt, at the same time, a profound pride at the thought of granting to a woman the title of his wife The feeling was solemn and shining it was almost as if he felt that he wished to honor a woman by the

of possessing her. Lillian seemed to fit the image he had not [illegible] race, [illegible] that [illegible] rk to [illegible] her
rough his mills He heard a soft, low, breathless tone—the tone admiration—growing in her voice, as she questioned him about work and looked at the place around her He looked at her [illegible]

[illegible]

saw the same look, but intensified to a degree that seemed to ake her helpless and silent. It was at dinner, that evening, that asked her to marry him.

It took him some time after his marriage before he admitted to mself that this was torture He still remembered the night when e *admitted it, when he told himself—the veins of his wrists pulled* ght as he stood by the bed, looking down at Lillian—that he eserved the torture and that he would endure it Lillian was not oking at him, she was adjusting her hair. "May I go to sleep ow?" she asked.

She had never objected, she had never refused him anything; he submitted whenever he wished. She submitted in the manner of omplying with the rule that it was, at times, her duty to become an nanimate object turned over to her husband's use

She did not censure him She made it clear that she took it for ranted that men had degrading instincts which constituted the ecret, ugly part of marriage She was condescendingly tolerant. he smiled, in amused distaste, at the intensity of what he experienced. "It's the most undignified pastime I know of," she said to im once, "but I have never entertained the illusion that men are uperior to animals"

His desire for her had died in the first week of their marriage What remained was only a need which he was unable to destroy He had never entered a [illegible]

[illegible]

k up the book and continue her reading

He told himself that he deserved the torture, because he had wished never to touch her again and was unable to maintain his decision. He despised himself for that. He despised a need which now held no shred of joy or meaning, which had become the mere need of a woman's body, an anonymous body that belonged to a woman whom he had to forget while he held it. He became convinced that the need was depravity.

He did not condemn Lillian He felt a dreary, indifferent respect for her His hatred of his own desire had made him accept the doctrine that women were pure and that a pure woman was one incapable of physical pleasure

Through the quiet agony of the years of his marriage, there had been one thought which he would not permit himself to consider: the thought of infidelity He had given his word. He intended to keep ... that ... not wanted to enter her room He had fought against it. He had fought, ... he would ... ad known ... ad driven ... for him.

He stood still, feeling free of desire, feeling the bleak relief of indifference to his body to this room, even to his presence here. He had turned away from her, not to see her lacquered chastity What he thought he should feel was respect; what he felt was revulsion

". . . but Dr Pritchett said that our culture is dying because our universities have to depend on the alms of the meat packers, the steel puddlers and the purveyors of breakfast cereals."

Why had she married him?—he thought That bright, crisp voice was not talking at random She knew why he had come here. She knew what it would do to him to see her pick up a silver buffer and go on talking gaily, polishing her fingernails She was talking about the party But she did not mention Bertram Scudder—or Dagny Taggart.

What had she sought in marrying him? He felt the presence of some cold, driving purpose within her—but found nothing to condemn She had never tried to use him She made no demands on ... such marriage She wanted nothing material from him.

He turned and looked at her wearily.

"Next time you give a party," he said, "stick to your own crowd. Don't invite what you think are my friends. I don't care to meet them socially"

She laughed, startled and pleased. "I don't blame you, darling," she said.

He walked out, adding nothing else

What did she want from him?—he thought. What was she after? In the universe as he knew it, there was no answer.

: rails rose through the rocks to the oil derricks and the oil ricks rose to the sky Dagny stood on the bridge, looking up at crest of the hill where the sun hit a spot of metal on the top the highest rigging It looked like a white torch lighted over the w on the ridges of Wyatt Oil

By spring, she thought, the track would meet the line growing vard it from Cheyenne She let her eyes follow the green-blue ls that started from the derricks, came down, went across the idge and past her She turned her head to follow them through : miles of clear air, as they went on in great curves hung on the les of the mountains, far to the end of the new track, where a comotive crane, like an arm of naked bones and nerves, moved tsely against the sky.

A tractor went past her, loaded with green blue bolts The sound drills came as a steady shudder from far below, where men rung on metal cables, cutting the straight stone drop of the canyon all to reinforce the abutments of the bridge Down the track, she uld see men working, their arms stiff with the tension of their uscles as they gripped the handles of electric tie tampers

"Muscles, Miss Taggart," Ben Nealy, the contractor, had said to r, "muscles—that's all it takes to build anything in the world"

No contractor equal to McNamara seemed to exist anywhere he had taken the best she could find. No engineer on the Taggart aff could be trusted to supervise the job all of them were skepti-l about the new metal "Frankly, Miss Taggart," her chief en-ineer had said, "since it is an experiment that nobody has ever ttempted before, I do not think it s fair that it should be my sponsibility" "It s mine," she had answered He was a man in is forties who still preserved the breezy manner of the college rom which he had graduated. Once, Taggart Transcontinental had ad a chief engineer, a silent, gray haired self-educated man who ould not be matched on any railroad He had resigned, five years go.

She glanced down over the bridge She was standing on a slender eam *of steel* above a gorge that had cracked the mountains to depth of fifteen hundred feet. Far at the bottom she could dis nguish the dim outlines of a dry river bed, of piled boulders of ees contorted by centuries She wondered whether boulders tree runks l muscles could ever bridge that canyon She wondered
d herself thinking suddenly that cave-dwellers had
n the bottom of that canyon for ages
p at the Wyatt oil fields The track broke into sidings
. She saw the small disks of switches dot ed against
were metal switches of the kind that were scattered
noticed throughout the country—but these were
s were greenish-blue What they
ur of speaking quietly evenly
less target that was the person
Amalgamated Switch and Signal

Company, Inc. of Connecticut. "But, Miss Taggart, my dear Miss Taggart! My company has served your company for generations, why, your grandfather was the first customer of my grandfather, so you cannot doubt our eagerness to do anything you ask, but—did you say switches made of Rearden Metal?"

"Yes."

"But, Miss Taggart! Consider what it would mean, having to work with that metal. Do you know that the stuff won't melt under less than four thousand degrees? . . . Great? Well, maybe that's great for motor manufacturers, but what I'm thinking of is that it means a new type of furnace, a new process entirely, men to be trained, schedules upset, work rules shot, everything balled up and then God only knows whether it will come out right or not! . . . How do you know, Miss Taggart? How can you know, when it's never been done before? . . . Well, I can't say that that metal is good and I can't [illegible] whether [illegible] a great [illegible] Well, no [illegible] use wh[illegible] am I to take a chance on a job of this kind?"

She had doubled the price of her order. Rearden had sent two metallurgists to train Mowen's men, to teach, to show, to explain every step of the process, and had paid the salaries of Mowen's men while they were being trained.

She looked at the [illegible] They meant th[illegible]

[illegible] she had obtained a paper that was an emergency permit of a legality no one would ever be able to untangle, she had had the padlocked doors of the Summit Casting plant unlocked and a random, half-dressed crew [illegible] had turned gray with d[illegible] Taggart engi[illegible] of the Rio Norte Li[illegible]

She listened to the sound of the drills. The work had been held up once, when the drilling for the bridge abutments was stopped. "I couldn't help it, Miss Taggart," Ben Nealy had said, offended. "You know how fast drill heads wear out. I had them on order, but Incorporated Tool ran into a little trouble, they couldn't help it either, Associated Steel was delayed in delivering the steel to them, so there's nothing we can do but wait. It's no use getting upset, Miss Taggart. I'm doing my best."

"I've hired you to do a job, not to do your best—whatever that is."

"That's a funny thing to say. That's an unpopular attitude, Miss Taggart, mighty unpopular."

"Forget Incorporated Tool. Forget the steel. Order the drill heads made of Rearden Metal."

"Not me I've had enough trouble with the damn stuff in that rail of yours. I m not going to mess up my own equipment "
"A drill head of Rearden Metal will outlast three of steel "
"Maybe "
"I said order them made "
"Who s going to pay for it?"
"I am."
"Who s going to find somebody to make them?"
She had telephoned Rearden He had found an abandoned tool

ing. She had thought of a new bridge of Rearden Metal She had asked her chief engineer to submit a design and an estimate of the cost The

n't know what you mean when you say that I haven't made use of the metal This design is an adaptation of the best bridges on record. What else did you expect?"
"A new method of construction "
"What do you mean a new method?"
"I mean that when men got structural steel they d d not use it to build steel copies of wooden bridges She had added wearily Get me an estimate on what we ll need to make our old bridge last for another five years
"Yes Miss Taggart " he had said cheerfully "If we reinforce it with steel—"
"We'll reinforce it with Rearden Metal "
"Yes Miss Taggart " he had said coldly
She looked at the snow-covered mountains Her job had seemed hard at times in New York She had stopped for blank moments in the middle of her office paralyzed by despa r at the rigidity of time which she could not stretch any further—on a day when urgent appointments had succeeded one another when she had discussed worn D esels rotting freight cars failing signal systems fall ng revenues, while thinking of the latest emergency on the Rio Norte construction when she had talked with the vision of two streaks of green-blue metal cutting across her mind when she had interrupted the discussions realizing suddenly why a certa n news item had disturbed her and seized the telephone rece ver to call long distance to call her contractor to say "Where do you get the food from, for your men? I thought so Well Barton and Jones of Denver went bankrupt yesterday Better find another suppl er at

once if you don't want to have a famine on your hands" She had been building the line from her desk in New York It had seemed hard But now she was looking at the track It was growing It would be done on time

She heard sharp hurried footsteps and turned A man was coming up the track He was tall and young, his head of black hair was hatless in the cold wind he wore a workman's leather jacket, but he did not look like a workman, there was too imperious an assurance in the way he walked She could not recognize the face until he came closer It was Ellis Wyatt. She had not seen him since that one interview in her office

He approached stopped looked at her and smiled

'Hello, Dagny he said

In a single shock of emotion, she knew everything the two words were intended to tell her It was forgiveness, understanding, acknowledgment. It was a salute.

She laughed, like a child, in happiness that things should be as right as that

"Hello," she said extending her hand

His hand held hers an instant longer than a greeting required. It was their signature under a score settled and understood

"Tell Nealy to put up new snow fences for a mile and a half on Granada Pass" he said "The old ones are rotted They won t stand through another storm Send him a rotary plow What he's got is a piece of junk that wouldn t sweep a back yard The big snows are coming any day now"

She considered him for a moment "How often have you been doing this? she asked

"What?'

"Coming to watch the work."

"Every now and then When I have time Why?"

"Were you here the night when they had the rock slide?"

"Yes"

"I was surprised how quickly and well they cleared the track, when I got the reports about it It made me think that Nealy was a better man than I had thought."

"He isn t."

"Was it you who organized the system of moving his day's supplies down to the line?"

"Sure His men used to spend half their time hunting for things. Tell him to watch his water tanks They'll freeze on him one of these nights See if you can get him a new ditcher I don t like the looks of the one he s got Check on his wiring system"

She looked at him for a moment "Thanks Ellis, she said

He [illegible]

the b [illegible]

"H[illegible]

Sh[illegible]

was pointing at Ellis Wyatt.

"What place?"

The railroad, Miss Taggart. Your railroad. Or the whole world 'be That's what he thinks "

'en Nealy was a bulky man with a soft, sullen face His eyes e stubborn and blank. In the bluish light of the snow, his skin the tinge of butter.

What does he keep hanging around here for?" he said. "As if ody knew their business but him. The snooty show-off. Who does think he is?"

God damn you," said Dagny evenly, not raising her voice.

Nealy could never know what had made her say it. But some t of him, in some way of his own, knew it: the shocking thing her was that he was not shocked He said nothing

'Let's go to your quarters," she said wearily, pointing to an old lway coach on a spur in the distance. "Have somebody there to e notes "

'Now about those crossties, Miss Taggart," he said hastily as they rted. "Mr. Coleman of your office okayed them He didn't say ything about too much bark. I don't see why you think they're—"

"I said you're going to replace them "

When she came out of the coach, exhausted by two hours of ort to be patient, to instruct, to explain—she saw an automobile rked on the torn dirt road below, a black two-seater, sparkling d new A new car was an astonishing sight anywhere, one did t see them often.

She glanced around and gasped at the sight of the tall figure nding at the foot of the bridge It was Hank Rearden, she had t expected to find him in Colorado. He seemed absorbed in lculations, pencil and notebook in hand His clothes attracted tention, like his car and for the same reason, he wore a simple enchcoat and a hat with a slanting brim, but they were of such od quality, so flagrantly expensive that they appeared ostentatious nong the seedy garments of the crowds everywhere, the more tentatious because worn so naturally

She noticed suddenly that she was running toward him, she had st all trace of exhaustion Then she remembered that she had not en him since the party. She stopped.

He saw her, he waved to her in a gesture of pleased astonished reeting, and he walked forward to meet her He was smiling.

"Hello," he said "Your first trip to the job?"

"My fifth, in three months "

"I d dn't know you were here Nobody told me "

"I thought you'd break down some day "

"Break down?'

"Enough to come and see this There's your Metal How do you ke it?"

He glanced around "If you ever decide to quit the railroad business, let me know."

"You d give me a job?"

"Any time "

She looked at him for a moment. "You're only half-kidding. Hank. I think you'd like it—having me ask you for a job. Having

me for an employee instead of a customer. Giving me orders to obey."

"Yes I would"

She said, her face hard, "Don't quit the steel business I won' promise you a job on the railroad"

He laughed 'Don't try it."

"What?"

"To win any battle when I set the terms"

She did not answer She was struck by what the words made he feel, it was not an emotion, but a physical sensation of pleasur which she could not name or understand

'Incidentally,' he said, "this is not my first trip. I was he yesterday"

"You were? Why?"

'Oh, I came to Colorado on some business of my own, so thought I'd take a look at this"

"What are you after?"

"Why do you assume that I'm after anything?"

"You wouldn't waste time coming here just to look. Not twice"

He laughed "True' He pointed at the bridge "I'm after that.

'What about it?"

'It's ready for the scrap heap"

"Do you suppose that I don't know it?"

"I saw the specifications of your order for Rearden Metal me bers for that bridge You're wasting your money The differer between what you're planning to spend on a makeshift that will l a couple of years and the cost of a new Rearden Metal bridge, comparatively so little that I don't see why you want to both preserving this museum piece"

"I've thought of a new Rearden Metal bridge I've had my gineers give me an estimate '

"What did they tell you?"

"Two million dollars"

"Good God!'

"What would you say?"

"Eight hundred thousand"

She looked at him She knew that he never spoke idly. She ask trying to sound calm, "How?"

"Like this"

He showed her his notebook. She saw the disjoined notations had made, a great many figures, a few rough sketches She und stood his scheme before he had finished explaining it. She did notice that they had sat down, that they were sitting on a pile frozen lumber, that her legs were pressed to the rough planks she could feel the cold through her thin stockings They were together over a few scraps of paper which could make it poss for thousands of

voice sounded

loads, wind pre

foot truss spac

been made before and could not be made except with members

the strength and the lightness of Rearden Metal
lank," she asked, "did you invent this in two days?"
'ell, no I 'invented' it long before I had Rearden Metal I
ed it out while making steel for bridges I wanted a metal with
h one would be able to do this, among other things I came
just to see your particular problem for myself"
: chuckled, when he saw the slow movement of her hand across
eyes and the line of bitterness in the set of her mouth, as if she
trying to wipe out the things against which she had fought
an exhausting, cheerless battle
'his is only a rough scheme," he said, "but I believe you see
t can be done?"
can't tell you all that I see, Hank."
Don't bother. I know it."
You're saving Taggart Transcontinental for the second time."
You used to be a better psychologist than that."
What do you mean?"
Why should I give a damn about saving Taggart Transcontinen-
Don't you know that I want to have a bridge of Rearden
al to show the country?"
Yes, Hank I know it."
There are too many people yelping that rails of Rearden Metal
unsafe So I th[illegible] yelp about.

[illegible] light.

Hank, I don't know anyone, not anyone in the world who'd
k of such an answer to people, in such circumstances—except

What about you? Would you want to make the answer with
and face the same screaming?"
You knew I would."
Yes. I knew it."
He glanced at her, his eyes narrowed, he did not laugh as she
l, but the glance was an equivalent
She remembered suddenly their last meeting at the party The
mory seemed incredible Their ease with each other—the strange,
t-headed feeling, which included the knowledge that it was
only sense of ease either of them found anywhere—made the
ught of hostility impossible Yet she knew that the party had
en place, he acted as if it had not.
They walked to the edge of the canyon Together, they looked
the dark drop, at the rise of rock beyond it at the sun high on
derricks of Wyatt Oil She stood, her feet apart on the frozen
nes braced firmly against the wind. She could feel without
ching it, the line of his chest behind her shoulder The wind
it her coat against his legs
"Hank, do you think we can build it in time? There are only six
nths left."
"Sure. It will take less time and labor than any other type of
dge. Let me have my engineers work out the basic scheme and

submit it to you No obligation on your part Just take a look at it and see for yourself whether you'll be able to afford it. You will. Then you can let your college boys work out the details"

'What about the Metal?

I ll get the Metal rolled if I have to throw every other order out of the mills

"You ll get it rolled on so short a notice?"

"Have I ever held you up on an order?"

No But the way things are going nowadays, you might not be able to help it

"Who do you think you re talking to—Orren Boyle?"

She laughed All right Let me have the drawings as soon as possible I ll take a look and let you know within forty-eight hours. As to my college boys they— She stopped frowning "Hank, why is it so hard to find good men for any job nowadays?'

I don t know

He looked at the lines of the mountains cut across the sky A thin jet of smoke was rising from a distant valley

"Have you seen the new towns of Colorado and the factories?" he asked

"Yes"

Its great isn t it?—to see the kind of men they've gathere

them young all o

untains.'

"What are you doing in Colorado?"

He smiled Looking at a mining property"

"What sort?"

"Copper"

Good God don t you have enough to do?"

"I know its a complicated job But the supply of copper i becoming completely unreliable There doesn t seem to be a singl first rate company left in the business in this country—and I don want

iyboy"

"I

"S

to mu

my

take a

chan

by all those failures and shortages need a great deal of copper for Rearden Metal"

"Have you bought the mine?"

"Not yet There are a few problems to solve Getting the me the equipment the transportation"

"Oh !" She chuckled Going to speak to me about buildi a branch line?

"Might There s no l mit to whats possible in this state Do yo know that they have every kind of natural resource here waitin untouched? And the way their factories are growing! I feel t years younger when I come here"

"I don t" She was looking east, past the mountains "I thi of the contrast, all over the rest of the Taggart system. There s lt

carry less tonnage produced each year It s as if . . Hank, ats wrong with the country?

"I don't know "

"I keep thinking of what they told us in school about the sun ing energy growing colder each year I remember wondering en, what it would be like in the last days of the world I think it ould be like this Growing colder and things stopping

"I never believed that story I thought by the time the sun was hausted, men would find a substitute

"You did? Funny I thought that too "

He pointed at the column of smoke "There s your new sunrise 's going to feed the rest "

"If its not stopped "

"Do you think it can be stopped?"

She looked at the rail under her feet "No " she said

He smiled. He looked down at the rail then let his eyes move long the track, up the sides of the mountains to the distant crane he saw two things as if for a moment the two stood alone in her eld of vision the lines of his profile and the green blue cord oiling through space

"We've done it haven't we?" he said

In payment for every effort, for every sleepless night, for every lent thrust against despair this moment was all she wanted Yes. We have."

She looked away noticed an old crane on a siding and thought hat its cables were worn and would need replacing. This was the [illegible] the reward of having [illegible] ment she thought and [illegible] sing it together—what [illegible] she was free for the upest, most commonplace concerns of the moment, because thing could be meaningless within her sight

She wondered what made her certain that he felt as she did e turned abruptly and started toward his car She followed. They d not look at each other

"I'm due to leave for the East in an hour he said

She pointed at the car Where did you get that?"

"Here It s a Hammond Hammond of Colorado—they re the only eople who're still making a good car I just bought it on this ip "

"Wonderful job "

"Yes, isn t it?"

"Going to drive it back to New York?"

"No I'm having it sh pped I flew my plane down here "

"Oh, you did? I drove down from Cheyenne—I had to see the line—but I'm anxious to get home as fast as poss ble Would you take me along? Can I fly back with you?"

He d d not answer at once She noticed the empty moment of a pause "I m sorry " he said she wondered whether she imag ned the note of abruptness in his voice "I m not flying back to New York. I'm going to Minnesota "

"Oh well, then I'll try to get on an air liner, if I can find one today"

She watched his car vanish down the winding road She drove to the airport an hour later The place was a small field at the bottom of a break in the desolate chain of mountains There were patches of snow on the hard, pitted earth The pole of a beacon stood at one side trailing wires to the ground, the other poles had been knocked down by a storm

A lonely attendant came to meet her "No, Miss Taggart," he said regretfully no planes till day after tomorrow There's only one transcontinental liner every two days, you know, and the one that was due today has been grounded, down in Arizona Engine trouble as usual He added It s a pity you didn't get here a bit sooner Mr Rearden took off for New York, in his private plane just a little while ago"

"He wasn t flying to New York, was he?"

"Why, yes He said so"

"Are you sure?"

"He said he had an appointment there tonight"

She looked at the sky to the east, blankly, without moving. She had no clue to any reason nothing to give her a foothold, nothing with which to weigh this or fight it or understand

* *

"Damn these streets!" said James Taggart "We're going to be late"

Dagny glanced ahead past the back of the chauffeur Through the circle made by a windshield wiper on the sleet streaked glass, she saw black worn glistening car tops strung in a motionless line. Far ahead the smear of a red lantern, low over the ground, marked a street excavation

"There s something wrong on every other street," said Taggart irritably "Why doesn t somebody fix them?"

She leaned back against the seat, tightening the collar of her wrap She felt exhausted at the end of a day she had started at her desk, in her office at seven A M, a day she had broken off, uncompleted to rush home and dress because she had promised Jim to speak at the dinner of the New York Business Council "They want us to give them a talk about Rearden Metal," he had said "You can do it so much better than I It's very important that we present a good case There s such a controversy about Rearden Metal"

Sitting beside him in his car she regretted that she had agreed She looked at the streets of New York and thought of the race between metal and time between the rails of the Rio Norte Line and the passing days She felt as if her nerves were being pulled tight by the stillness of the car by the guilt of wasting an evening when she could not afford to waste an hour

"With all those attacks on Rearden that one hears everywhere said Taggart "he might need a few friends"

She glanced at him incredulously "You mean you want to stand by him?"

He did not answer at once, he asked, his voice bleak, "Th

rt of the special committee of the National Council of Metal istries—what do you think of it?"
You know what I think of it."
They said Rearden Metal is a threat to public safety They said chemical composition is unsound, it's brittle, it s decomposing ecularly, and it will crack suddenly, without warning " He ped, as if begging for an answer She did not answer He asked iously, "You haven't changed your mind about it have you?"
About what?"
About that metal "
No, Jim, I have not changed my mind "
They re experts though the men on that committee . . . experts . Chief metallurgists for the biggest corporations, a string of degrees from universities all over the country " He said it unhappily, as if he were begging her to make him bt these men and their verdict
he watched him puzzled this was not like him.
he car jerked forward It moved slowly through a gap in a k barrier, past the hole of a broken water main She saw the pipe stacked by the excavation, the pipe bore a trademark

[illegible]

Taggart did not turn to her, but his jaw snapped open "If that slob thinks he can—" he started but stopped and did not finish
She looked up at a street lamp on the corner It was a globe of ss filled with light It hung, secure from storm lighting boarded dows and cracked sidewalks as their only guardian At the end the street, across the river, against the glow of a factory she the thin tracing of a power station A truck went by hiding view It was the kind of truck that fed the power station—a k truck, its bright new paint impervious to sleet, green with ite letters Wyatt Oil Colorado
"Dagny, have you heard about that discussion at the structural el workers' union meeting in Detroit?"
"No. W...

hether their mem- ork with Rearden as enough for the Rearden Metal He ...lled his order, but fast! What if what if everybody sides against it?"
"Let them."
A dot of light was rising in a straight line to the top of an invisible wer It was the elevator of a great hotel The car went past the ilding's alley Men were moving a heavy crated piece of equipment from a truck into the basement She saw the name on the ate Nielsen Motors, Colorado

"I don't like that resolution passed by the convention of the grade school teachers of New Mexico," said Taggart.

"What resolution?"

"They resolved that it was their opinion that children should not be permitted to ride on the new Rio Norte Line of Taggart Transcontinental when it's completed, because it is unsafe . . They said it specifically, the new line of *Taggart Transcontinental* It was in all the newspapers It's terrible publicity for us. . . . Dagny, what do you think we should do to answer them?"

"Run the first train on the new Rio Norte Line"

He remained silent for a long time He looked strangely dejected She could not understand it he did not gloat, he did not use the opinions of his favorite authorities against her, he seemed to be pleading for reassurance

A car flashed past them, she had a moment's glimpse of power— ... the make

built . . .

on time?

It was strange to hear a note of plain emotion in his voice, the uncomplicated sound of animal fear

'God help this city, if we don t!" she answered.

The car turned a corner Above the black roofs of the city, she saw the page of the calendar, lit by the white glare of a spotlight It said January 29

"Dan Conway is a bastard!"

The words broke out suddenly, as if he could not hold them any longer

She looked at him, bewildered "Why?"

"He refused to sell us the Colorado track of the Phoenix Durango"

"You didn't—" She had to stop She started again, keeping her voice flat in order not to scream. "You haven't approached him about it?'

'Of course I have!"

"You didn't expect him . . . to sell it . . . to *you?*"

"Why not? His hysterically belligerent manner was back " offered him more than anybody else did We wouldn't have had the expense of tear ... sed ... —tha ... oublic ... will

But the son of a bitch refused He's actually declared that not a foot of rail would be sold to Taggart Transcontinental He's selling it piecemeal to any stray comer, to one horse railroads in Arkansas or North Dakota, selling it at a loss, way under what I offered him the bastard! Doesn t even want to take a profit! And you should see those vultures flocking to him! They know they'd never have a chance to get rail anywhere else!"

She sat her head bowed She could not bear to look at him.

"I think it s *contrary* to the intent of the Anti dog-eat-dog Rule,'

said angrily "I think it was the intent and purpose of the National Alliance of Railroads to protect the essential systems, not the jerk-waters of North Dakota But I can't get the Alliance to vote on it now, because they're all down there, outbidding one another for that rail!"

She said slowly as if she wished it were possible to wear gloves to handle the words, "I see why you want me to defend Rearden Metal"

"I don't know what you're—"

"Shut up, Jim," she said quietly.

He remained silent for a moment. Then he drew his head back and drawled defiantly, "You'd better do a good job of defending Rearden Metal because Bertram Scudder can get pretty sarcastic"

"Bertram Scudder?"

"He's going to be one of the speakers tonight."

"One of the . . . You didn't tell me there were to be other speakers."

"Well . . I . . What difference does that make? You're not afraid of him are you?"

"The New York *Business* Council . . . and you invite Bertram Scudder?"

"Why not? Don't you think it's smart? He doesn't have any hard feelings toward businessmen not really He's accepted the invitation. We want to be broad minded and hear all sides and maybe win him over Well, what are you staring at? You'll be able to beat him, won't you?"

" . to beat him?"

"On the air It's going to be a radio broadcast You're going to debate with him the question 'Is Rearden Metal a lethal product of greed?'"

She leaned forward She pulled open the glass partition of the front seat, ordering, "Stop the car!"

She did not hear what Taggart was saying She noticed dimly that his voice rose to screams "They're waiting! Five hundred people at the dinner, and a national hook up! You can't do this to me!" He seized her arm screaming But why?"

"You goddamn fool, do you think I consider their question debatable?"

The car stopped, she leaped out and ran.

The first thing she noticed after a while, was her slippers She was walking slowly, normally, and it was strange to feel iced stone under the thin soles of black satin sandals She pushed her hair back, off her forehead, and felt drops of sleet melting on her palm

She was quiet now, the blinding anger was gone she felt nothing but a gray weariness Her head ached a little she realized that she was hungry and remembered that she was to have had dinner at the Business Council She walked on. She did not want to eat. She thought she would get a cup of coffee somewhere then take a cab home.

She glanced around her There were no cabs in sight. She did not know the neighborhood. It did not seem to be a good one

an empty stretch of space across the street, an abandoned park encircled by a jagged line that began as distant skyscrapers and came down to factory chimneys, she saw a few lights in the windows of dilapidated houses, a few small, grimy shops closed for the night, and the fog of the East River two blocks away

She started back toward the center of the city The black shape of a ruin rose before her It had been an office building, long ago she saw the sky through the naked steel skeleton and the angular remnants of the bricks that had crumbled In the shadow of the ruin like a blade of grass fighting to live at the roots of a dead giant, there stood a small diner Its windows were a bright bar of glass and light She went in.

There was a clean counter inside, with a shining strip of chromium at the edges There was a bright metal boiler and the odor of coffee A few derelicts sat at the counter, a husky, elderly man stood behind it the sleeves of his clean white shirt rolled at the elbows The warm air made her realize, in simple gratitude, that she had been cold She pulled her black velvet cape tight about her and sat down at the counter

"A cup of coffee please" she said

The men looked at her without curiosity They did not seem astonished to see a woman in evening clothes enter a slum diner nothing astonished anyone these days The owner turned impassively to fill her order there was in his stolid indifference, the kind of mercifulness that asks no questions

She could not tell whether the four at the counter were beggars or working men neither clothes nor manner showed the difference, these days The owner placed a mug of coffee before her She closed both hands about it, finding enjoyment in its warmth.

She glanced around her and thought, in habitual professional calculation how wonderful it was that one could buy so much for a dime Her eyes moved from the stainless steel cylinder of the coffee boiler to the cast iron griddle, to the glass shelves, to the enameled sink to the chromium blades of a mixer The owner was making toast. She found pleasure in watching the ingenuity of an open belt that moved slowly, carrying slices of bread past glowing electric coils Then she saw the name stamped on the toaster Marsh Colorado

Her head fell down on her arm on the counter

"It s no use lady" said the old bum beside her

She had to raise her head She had to smile in amusement, at him and at herself

"It isn't?' she asked

"No Forget it You re only fooling yourself."

"About what?"

"About anything being worth a damn It s dust, lady, all of it dust and blood Don t believe the dreams they pump you full of and you won t get hurt."

"What dreams?"

"The stories they tell you when you're young—about the human spirit. There isn t any human spirit. Man is just a low grade animal

out intellect, without soul, without virtues or moral values An ıal with only two capacities to eat and to reproduce"

ʼs gaunt face with staring eyes and shrunken features that had ı delicate still retained a trace of distinction He looked like hulk of an evangelist or a professor of esthetics who had spent rs in contemplation in obscure museums She wondered what destroyed him, what error on the way could bring a man to

You go through life looking for beauty, for greatness for some lime achievement," he said "And what do you find? A lot of k machinery for making upholstered cars or inner-spring mat-sses"

"What's wrong with inner-spring mattresses?' said a man who ked like a truck driver "Don't mind him, lady He likes to hear nself talk He don't mean no harm"

"Man's only talent is an ignoble cunning for satisfying the needs his body," said the old bum "No intelligence is required for that. n't believe the stories about man's mind, his spirit, his ideals, his se of unlimited ambition"

"I don't," said a young boy who sat at the end of the counter e wore a coat ripped across one shoulder his square shaped outh seemed formed by the bitterness of a lifetime

"Spirit?" said the old bum "There's no spirit involved in manu cturing or in sex. Yet these are man's only concerns Matter—at's all men know or care about As witness our great industries—e only accomplishment of our alleged civilization—built by vulgar aterialists with the aims, the interests and the moral sense of hogs doesn't take any morality to turn out a ten ton truck on an as mbly line"

"What is morality?" she asked

"Judgment to distinguish right and wrong vision to see the truth, ourage to act upon it, dedication to that which is good integrity o stand by the good at any price. But where does one find it?

The young boy made a sound that was half-chuckle, half sneer

[illegible]

[illegible] low over his eyes "I know"

Nobody heard him or paid any attention The young boy was watching Dagny with a kind of fierce, purposeless intensity

"You're not afraid" he said to her suddenly without explanation, ʼ that statement in a brusque, lifeless voice that had a note of won

She looked at him "No," she said "I'm not."

"I know who is John Galt," said the tramp "It's a secret, but know it."

"Who?" she asked without interest.

"An explorer," said the tramp "The greatest explorer that ever ved. The man who found the fountain of youth."

"Give me another cup Black," said the old bum, pushing his cup across the counter

John Galt spent years looking for it He crossed oceans and he crossed deserts and he went down into forgotten mines, miles under the earth But he found it on the top of a mountain It took him ten years to climb that mountain It broke every bone in his body it tore the skin off his hands it made him lose his home, his name his love But he climbed it He found the fountain of youth, which he wanted to bring down to men Only he never came back"

"Why didn t he? she asked

"Because he found that it couldn t be brought down"

* *

The man who sat in front of Rearden's desk had vague features and a manner devoid of all emphasis, so that one could form no specific image of his face nor detect the driving motive of his person His only mark of distinction seemed to be a bulbous nose, a bit too large for the rest of him his manner was meek, but it conveyed a preposterous hint the hint of a threat deliberately kept furtive yet intended to be recognized Rearden could not understand the purpose of his visit He was Dr Potter, who held some undefined position with the State Science Institute

"What do you want? Rearden asked for the third time

"It is the social aspect that I am asking you to consider, Mr Rearden," the man said softly "I urge you to take note of the age we re living in Our economy is not ready for it"

"For what?"

"Our economy is in a state of extremely precarious equilibrium We all have to pool our efforts to save it from collapse"

"Well, what is it you want me to do?"

"These are the considerations which I was asked to call to your attention I am from the State Science Institute Mr Rearden"

"You've said so before But what did you wish to see me about

"The State Science Institute does not hold a favorable opinion of Rearden Metal"

"You've said that too"

"Isn t that a factor which you must take into consideration?"

"No"

The light was growing dim in the broad windows of the off[illegible]

[illegible]

country, Mr Rearden."

"So I m told"

"Surely you do not want to pit your own judgment against theirs?"

"I do"

[illegible]

"It's only a quest on of time Mr Rearden" the man said placat ngly "Just a temporary delay Just to give our economy a chance to get stabilized If you d only wait for a couple of years—"

Rearden chuckled gaily contemptuously "So that s what you re after? Want me to take Rearden Metal off the market? Why?"

"Only for a few years Mr Rearden Only until—"

"Look," said Rearden "Now I'll ask you a question did your scientists decide that Rearden Metal is not what I claim it is?

"We have not committed ourselves as to that."

"D d they decide it s no good?"

[illegible]

u—

'Is Rearden Metal good or not?"

'If we view the picture from the angle of the alarming growth of employment, which at present—

"Is Rearden Metal good?"

"At a time of desperate steel shortage we cannot afford to permit expans on of a steel company which produces too much be- use it might throw out of business the companies which produce little, thus creating an unbalanced economy which—"

"Are you going to answer my question?"

The man shrugged "Questions of value are relative If Rearden etal is not good it s a physical danger to the public If it *is* good— s a social danger"

"If you have anything to say to me about the physical danger of earden Metal say it. Drop the rest of it. Fast I don t speak that nguage"

"But surely questions of social welfare—"

"Drop it."

The man looked bewildered and lost as if the ground had been ut from under his feet In a moment, he asked helplessly "But hat, then is your chief concern?

"The market"

"How do you mean?"

"There s a market for Rearden Metal and I intend to take full dvantage of it."

"Isn t the market somewhat hypothetical? The publ c response to our metal has not been encouraging Except for the order from Taggart Transcontinental you haven t obtained any major—"

"Well then, if you think the public won t go for it what are you worrying about?"

"If the public doesn t go for it you will take a heavy loss Mr R arden"

"That s my worry not yours"

"Whereas if you adopt a more co-operative attitude and agree to wait for a few years—"

"Why should I wa t?"

"But I bel eve I have made it clear that the State Science Insti tute does not approve of the appearance of Rearden Metal on the

metallurgical scene at the present time"

"Why should I give a damn about that?"

The man sighed "You are a very difficult man, Mr Rearden."

The sky of the late afternoon was growing heavy, as if thickening against the glass of the windowpanes The outlines of the man's figure seemed to dissolve into a blob among the sharp, straight planes of the furniture

"I gave you this appointment," said Rearden, "because you told me that you wished to discuss something of extreme importance If this is all you had to say, you will please excuse me now. I am very busy"

The man settled back in his chair "I believe you have spent ten years of research on Rearden Metal," he said 'How much has it cost you?

Rearden glanced up he could not understand the drift of the question yet there was an undisguised purposefulness in the man's voice, the voice had hardened.

"One and a half million dollars," said Rearden.

"How much will you take for it?"

could not believe it. "For

" said Rearden

You are a businessman I am offering you a business proposition You may name your own price"

"The *rights* to Rearden Metal are not for sale"

"I am in a position to speak of large sums of money. *Governmen* money"

Rearden sat without moving, the muscles of his cheeks pulle tight, but his glance was indifferent, focused only by the faint pu of morbid curiosity

"You are a businessman, Mr Rearden This is a propositio which you cannot afford to ignore On the one hand, you a gambling against great odds you are bucking an unfavorable pu lic opinion, you run a good chance of losing every penny you p into Rearden Metal On the ... ou of t ... mmedia ... ne sale ... nt, not ... out," said Rearden. "What is it that they're so afra of?"

"You are using ugly, unnecessary words, Mr Rearden I endeavoring to suggest that we keep the discussion on a frien plane The matter is serious"

"I am beginning to see that."

"We are offering you a blank check on what is, as you realize, unlimited account What else can you want? Name your price"

"The sale of the rights to Rearden Metal is not open to discuss If you have anything else to say, please say it and leave."

: man leaned back, looked at Rearden incredulously and , "What are you after?"

What do you mean?"

ou're in business to make money, aren't you?"

am."

ou want to make as big a profit as possible, don't you?"

do."

hen why do you want to struggle for years, squeezing out your s in the form of pennies per ton—rather than accept a fortune Rearden Metal? Why?"

Because it's *mine* Do you understand the word?"

he man sighed and rose to his feet. "I hope you will not have se to regret your decision, Mr Rearden," he said, the tone of his e was suggesting the opposite.

Good day," said Rearden.

I think I must tell you that the State Science Institute may issue official statement condemning Rearden Metal."

That is their privilege."

"Such a statement would make things more difficult for you."

"Undoubtedly"

"As to further consequences . . ." The man shrugged "This is t the day for people who refuse to co-operate In this age, one eds friends You are not a popular man, Mr Rearden."

"What are you trying to say?"

"Surely, you understand."

"I don't."

"Society is a complex structure. There are so many different sues awaiting decision, hanging by a thin thread. We can never ell when one such issue may be decided and what may be the de-sive factor in a delicate balance Do I make myself clear?"

"No."

The red flame of poured steel shot through the twilight. An orange glow, the color of deep gold, hit the wall behind Rearden's desk. The glow moved gently across his forehead. His face had an unmoving serenity

"The State Science Institute is a *government* organization. Mr Rearden. There are certain bills pending in the Legislature, which may be passed at any moment. Businessmen are peculiarly vulner able these days. I am sure you understand me."

Rearden rose to his feet. He was smiling. He looked as if all tension had left him

"No, Dr Potter," he said, "I don't understand. If I did, I'd have to kill you."

The man walked to the door, then stopped and looked at Rearden in a way which, for once, was simple human curiosity Rearden stood motionless against the moving glow on the wall he stood

Dagny could not understand Mr Mowen's motive The Amalgamated Switch and Signal Company had suddenly given notice that they would not complete her order Nothing had happened she could find no cause for it and they would give no explanation

She had hurried to Connecticut, to see Mr Mowen in person but the sole result of the interview was a heavier, grayer weight of bewilderment in her mind Mr Mowen stated that he would not continue to make switches of Rearden Metal. For sole explanation, he said avoiding her eyes "Too many people don't like it

"What? Rearden Metal or your making the switches?"

"Both I guess People don't like it . I don't want any trouble"

"What kind of trouble?'

"Any kind

Have you heard a single thing against Rearden Metal that's true?"

"Aw who knows what's true? That resolution of the National Council of Metal Industries said—"

"Look you've worked with metals all your life For the last four months you've worked with Rearden Metal Don't you know *that* it's the greatest thing you've ever handled? He did not answer "Don't you know it? He looked away 'Don't you know what's true?"

"Hell Miss Taggart, I'm in business I'm only a little guy I just want to make money"

"How do you think one makes it?"

But she knew that it was useless Looking at Mr Mowen's face, at the eyes which she could not catch, she felt as she had felt once on a lonely section of track, when a storm blew down the telephone wires that communications were cut and that words had become sounds which transmitted nothing

It was useless to argue, she thought, and to wonder about people who would neither refute an argument nor accept it Sitting restlessly in the train, on her way back to New York, she told herself that Mr Mowen did not matter, that nothing mattered now, except finding somebody else to manufacture the switches She was wrestling with a list of names in her mind, wondering who would be easiest to convince, to beg or to bribe

She knew, the moment she entered the anteroom of her office, that something had happened She saw the unnatural stillness, with the faces of her staff turned to her as if her entrance were the moment they had all waited for hoped for and dreaded

Eddie Willers *rose* to his feet and started toward the door of her office, as if knowing that she would understand and follow She [illegible]

[illegible] ie wished

[illegible] hey were

[illegible], has issued a statement warning people against the use of Rearden Metal" He added, "It was on the radio It's in the afternoon papers"

"What did they say?"

ly said it, yet it's
it."
quiet; he could
of him by the

ad left on her desk. "They haven't said that Rearden Metal
d. They haven't said that it's unsafe What they've done is . . ."
hands spread and dropped in a gesture of futility.

its properties would be of value."
We can't fight it. It can't be answered," Eddie was saying slowly.
e can't demand a retraction. We can't show them our tests or
ve anything. They've said nothing. They haven't said a thing
t could be refuted and embarrass them professionally. It's the
of a coward. You'd expect it from some con man or black-
ler But, Dagny! It's the State Science Institute!"
She nodded silently She stood, her eyes fixed on some point
yond the window

Eddie
port,
otherhood of Road and Track Workers has forbidden its mem-
rs to work on the Rio Norte Line. Jim has left town"
She took her hat and coat off, walked across the room and slowly,
ry deliberately sat down at her desk.
She noticed a large brown envelope lying before her; it bore
e letterhead of Rearden Steel.
"That came by special messenger, right after you left," said
ddie.
She put her hand on the envelope, but did not open it. She knew
hat it was the drawings of the bridge.
After a while, she asked, "Who issued that statement?"
Eddie glanced at her and smiled briefly, bitterly, shaking his
ead. "No," he said "I thought of that, too I called the Institute
ong-distance and asked them. No, it was issued by the office of
Dr. Floyd Ferris, their co-ordinator"
She said nothing.
"But still! Dr Stadler is the head of that Institute. He *is* the
Institute. He must have known about it. He permitted it. ...
done, it's done in his name . . . Dr Robert Stadler . . .

You are an unusual brilliant child who has not ... of life to grasp the full measure of human stupidity I've ... it all my life I'm very tired. " The sincerity of his vo... genuine He walked slowly away from her "There was a ... when I looked at the tragic mess they've made of this ... wanted to cry out to beg them to listen—I could teach them ... to live so much better than they did—but there was nobody to ...

... of its death

She made a movement to rise

Don't go Miss Taggart I'd like you to understand"

She raised her face to him in obedient indifference Her face was not pale but its planes stood out with strangely naked precision as if its skin had lost the shadings of color

You're young he said At your age, I had the same faith of the unlimited power of reason The same brilliant vision of man as a rational being I have seen so much since I have been disillusioned so often I'd like to tell you just one story"

He stood at the window of his office It had grown dark outside The darkness seemed to rise from the black cut of the river far below A few lights trembled in the water from among the ... of the other shore The sky was still the intense blue of evening A lonely star low over the earth seemed unnaturally large and made the sky look darker

When I was at the Patrick Henry University" he said, "I had three pupils I have had many bright students in the past, but these three were the kind of reward a teacher prays for If ever you could wish to receive the gift of the human mind at its best, young and delivered into your hands for guidance they were this gift Theirs was the kind of intelligence one expects to see in the future changing the course of the world They came from very different backgrounds but they were inseparable friends They made a strange choice of studies They majored in two subjects—mine and Hugh Akston's Physics and philosophy It is not a combination of interests one encounters nowadays Hugh Akston was a distinguished man a great mind unlike the incredible creature whom that University has now put in his place Akston and I were a little jealous of each other over these three students It was a kind of contest between us a friendly contest because we understood each other I heard Akston saying one day that he regarded them as his sons I resented it a little ... because I thought of them as mine

He turned and looked at her The bitter lines of age were ... now cutting across his cheeks He said When I endorsed the establishment of this Institute one of these three damned me I have not seen him since It used to disturb me in the first years I wondered once in a while whether he had been right It has ceased to disturb me long ago"

Dagny they didn t say it! . They haven t really said it, yet it s e—and it isn t. That s what s monstrous about it.
lis effort was focused on keeping his voice quiet he could control his words The words were forced out of him by the elieving bewildered indignation of a child screaming in denial his first encounter with evil
What did they say, Eddie?"
They You d have to read it." He pointed to the newspaper had left on her desk "They haven t said that Rearden Metal ad. They haven t said that it s unsafe What they've done is "
hands spread and dropped in a gesture of futility
She saw at a glance what they had done She saw the sentences
may be possible that after a period of heavy usage a sudden ure may appear, though the length of this period cannot be preted. The possibility of a molecular reaction at present known, cannot be entirely discounted Although the tensile ength of the metal is obviously demonstrable certain questions regard to its behavior under unusual stress are not to be ruled out.
Although there is no evidence to support the contention t the use of the metal should be prohibited a further study its properties would be of value"
"We can't fight it. It can t be answered," Eddie was saying slowly Ve can't demand a retraction. We can t show them our tests or ... n't said a thing ... ionally Its the ... man or black-
... suddenly She stood, her eyes fixed on some point yond the window At the end of a dark street, the bulbs of an ectric sign kept going on and off as if winking at her maliciously
Eddie gathered his strength and said in the tone of a military port, "Taggart stock has crashed Ben Nealy quit The National otherhood of Road and Track Workers has forb dden its mem ers to work on the Rio Norte Line. Jim has left town"
She took her hat and coat off walked across the room and slowly, ry deliberately sat down at her desk
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"But still! Dr Stadler is the head of that Institute. He *is* the stitute. He must have known about it. He permitted it. If one it s done in his name Dr Robert Stadler . Do

remember when we were in college how we used to talk about the great names in the world the men of pure intellect and we always chose his name as one of them and—" He stopped "I m sorry Dagny I know its no use saying anything. Only—"

She sat her hand pressed to the brown envelope

"Dagny he asked his voice low 'what is happening to people? Why did that statement succeed? obvious and so rotten You d thi it in the gutter How could —h desperate rebellious anger— how could they accept it they read it? Didn t they see? Don t they think? Dagny! What is it in people that lets them do this—and how can we live with it"

"Quiet Eddie she said quiet Don t be afraid"

* *

The building c New Hampshire and the sky Frc in a virgin fore were laid out as seen in a valley come too close and detract from the buildings austerity

The white marble of the walls gave it a classical grandeur the composition of its rectangular masses gave it the cleanliness and beauty of a modern plant. It was an inspired structure. From across the river people looked at it with reverence and thought of it as a monument to a living man whose character had the nobility of the building s lines Over the entrance a dedication was cut into the marble "To the fearless mind To the inviolate truth" In a quiet aisle in a bare corridor a small brass plate as dozens of other name plates on other doors, said Dr Robert Stadler

At the age of twenty-seven Dr Robert Stadler had written treatise on cosmic rays which demolished most of the theories held by the scientists who preceded him Those who followed found his achievement somewhere at the base of any line of inquiry they undertook At the age of thirty he was recognized as the greatest physicist of his time At thirty two he became head of the Department of Phys cs of the Patrick Henry University in the days when the great University still deserved its glory It was of Dr Robert Stadler that a wr ter had said Perhaps among the phenomena of the un verse which he is studying none is so miraculous as the brain of Dr Robert Stadler himself It was Dr Robert Stadler who had once corrected a student "Free scientific inquiry? The first adjective is redundant."

At the age of forty Dr Robert Stadler addressed the nation endors ng the establ hment of a State Science Institute. "Set science free of the rule of the dollar" he pleaded The issue had hung in balance an obscure group of scientists had quietly forced a bill through its long way to the floor of the Legislature there had been some public hesitation about the bill some doubt, an uneasiness

one could define The name of Dr Robert Stadler acted upon country like the cosmic rays he studied it pierced any bar-

s a cheap desk of ugly yellow oak, a filing cabinet, two chairs, a blackboard chalked with mathematical formulas Sitting on of the chairs against a blank wall Dagny thought that the had an air of ostentation and elegance, together ostentation, cause it seemed intended to suggest that the owner was great ough to permit himself such a setting elegance, because he ly needed nothing else

She had met Dr Stadler on a few occasions, at banquets given leading businessmen or great engineering societies, in honor some solemn cause or another She had attended the occasions reluctantly

ung, discarding emotion, seeking only to observe and to understand.

"Miss Taggart," he said gaily, "I'm curious about you I'm curious whenever anything upsets a precedent. As a rule visitors are a painful duty to me I'm frankly astonished that I should feel such simple pleasure in seeing you here Do you know what it's like feel suddenly that one can talk without the strain of trying to force some sort of understanding out of a vacuum?"

He sat on the edge of his desk, his manner gaily informal He was not tall, and his slenderness gave him an air of youthful energy, almost of boyish zest. His thin face was ageless it was a homely face, but the great forehead and the large gray eyes held such an arresting intelligence that one could notice nothing else.

faint

look

his

me more about yourself" he said "I always meant to ask you what you're doing in such an unlikely career as heavy industry and how you can stand those people."

"I cannot take too much of your time Dr Stadler She spoke with polite impersonal precision. "And the matter I came to discuss is extremely important."

He laughed. "*There's* a sign of the businessman—wanting to come to the point at once Well, by all means But don't worry about my time—it's yours Now what was it you said you wanted to discuss? Oh yes. Rearden Metal. Not exactly one of the subjects on which I'm best informed, but if there's anything I can do for you—" His hand moved in a gesture of invitation.

"Do you know the statement issued by this Institute in regard to Rearden Metal?

He frowned slightly Yes I've heard about it."

Have you read it?"

"No"

"It was intended to prevent the use of Rearden Metal"

"Yes yes I gathered that much

"Could you tell me why?"

He spread his hands they were attractive hands—long and bony beautiful in their suggestion of nervous energy and strength " really wouldn t know That is the province of Dr Ferris I m sure he had his reasons Would you like to speak to Dr Ferris?"

"No Are you familiar with the metallurgical nature of Rearden Metal Dr Stadler?

"Why yes a little But tell me why are you concerned about it?"

A flicker of astonishment rose and died in her eyes she answered without change in the impersonal tone of her voice "I am building a branch line with rails of Rearden Metal which—

"Oh but of course! I did hear something about it. You must forgive me I don t read the newspapers as regularly as I should It s

" letion c

that countr

will

The wrinkles of amusement deepened about his eyes "Can you make such a statement with positive assurance Miss Taggart? couldn't."

"In this case?"

"In any case Nobody can tell what the course of a country's future may be It is not a matter of calculable trends but a chaos subject to the rule of the moment in which anything is possible

"Do you think that production is necessary to the existence of country Dr Stadler?

"Why yes yes of course"

"The building of our branch line has been stopped by the statement of this Institute

He did not smile and he did not answer

"Does that statement represent your conclusion about the nature of Rearden Metal?" she asked.

"I have said that I have not read it." There was an edge of sharpness in his voice

She opened her bag took out a newspaper clipping and extended it to him "Would you read it and tell me whether this is a language which science may properly speak?"

He glanced through the clipping, smiled contemptuously and tossed it aside with a gesture of distaste Disgusting isn t it?" he said "But what can you do when you deal with people?"

She looked at him not understanding "You do not approve of that statement?"

He shrugged "My approval or disapproval would be irrelevant

'Have you formed a conclusion of your own about Rearden
tal?"

'Well, metallurgy is not exactly—what shall we say?—my
cialty"

'Have you examined any data on Rearden Metal?"

'Miss Taggart, I don't see the point of your questions" His
ce sounded faintly impatient.

'I would like to know your personal verdict on Rearden Metal."

"For what purpose?"

"So that I may give it to the press"

He got up "That is quite impossible."

She said, her voice strained with the effort of trying to force
derstanding, "I will submit to you all the information necessary
form a conclusive judgment."

"I cannot issue any public statements about it."

"Why not?"

"The situation is much too complex to explain in a casual discus-
n."

"But if you should find that Rearden Metal is, in fact, an ex-
mely valuable product which—"

"That is beside the point."

"The value of Rearden Metal is beside the point?"

"There are other issues involved, besides questions of fact."

She asked, not quite believing that she had heard him right,
hat other issues is science concerned with, besides questions
fact?"

The bitter lines of his mouth sharpened into the suggestion of a
ile. "Miss Taggart, you do not understand the problems of sci-
tists"

She said slowly, as if she were seeing it suddenly in time with
r words, "I believe that you do know what Rearden Metal really
.

He shrugged. [illegible]

ecial laboratory motor that would stand just such high tempera-
res as Rearden Metal can take It would be very valuable in con-
ction with certain phenomena I should like to observe I have
und that when particles are accelerated to a speed approaching
e speed of light, they—"

"Dr Stadler," she asked slowly, "you know the truth yet you
ill not state it publicly?"

"Miss Taggart, you are using an abstract term when we are deal-
g with a matter of practical reality"

"We are dealing with a matter of science"

"Science? Aren't you confusing the standards involved? It is
ly in the realm of pure science that truth is an absolute criterion.
hen we deal with applied science, with technology—we deal with
ople. And when we deal with people, considerations other than
uth enter the question."

"You are an unusual brilliant child who has not seen of life to grasp the full measure of human stupidity I' it all my life I m very tired. . ." The sincerity of his voice genuine He walked slowly away from her "There was a time when I looked at the tragic mess they've made of this earth, and I wanted to cry out to beg them to listen—I could teach them to l . so m ch better than they did—but there was nobody to h

among men and vanishes Ore cannot ture or its death "

She made a movement to rise.

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You re young he said "At your age, I had the same faith in the unlimited power of reason The same brilliant vision of man as a rational being I have seen so much since I have been disillusioned so often I d like to tell you just one story"

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He turned and looked at her The bitter lines of age were v now, cutting across his cheeks He said "When I endorsed establishment of this Institute one of these three damned I have not seen him since It used to disturb me in the fir years I wondered once in a while whether he had been right It has ceased to disturb me, long ago"

He smiled. There was nothing but bitterness now, in his smile and his face

"These three men, these three who held all the hope which the gift of intelligence ever proffered, these three from whom we expected such a magnificent future—one of them was Francisco d'Anconia, who became a depraved playboy Another was Ragnar Danneskjöld, who became a plain bandit. So much for the promise of the human mind"

Who was the third one?" she asked.

e shrugged "The third one did not achieve even that sort of rious distinction. He vanished without a trace—into the great rown of mediocrity. He is probably a second assistant bookker somewhere."

* *

It's a lie! I didn't run away!" cried James Taggart "I came e because I happened to be sick. Ask Dr Wilson It's a form flu. He'll prove it. And how did you know that I was here?"

Dagny stood in the middle of the room, there were melting wflakes on her coat collar, on the brim of her hat. She glanced ound, feeling an emotion that would have been sadness, had she l time to acknowledge it.

It was a room in the house of the old Taggart estate on the udson. Jim had inherited the place, but he seldom came here In er childhood, this had been their father's study Now it had e desolate air of a room which is used, yet uninhabited There re slipcovers on all but two chairs, a cold fireplace and the dismal warmth of an electric heater with a cord twisting across the or, a desk, its glass surface empty

Jim lay on the couch, with a towel wrapped for a scarf around s neck She saw a stale, filled ashtray on a chair beside him, a ottle of whisky, a wilted paper cup, and two-day-old newspapers cattered about the floor A portrait of their grandfather hung over the fireplace, full figure, with a railroad bridge in the fading ackground.

"I have no time for arguments, Jim."

"It was your idea! I hope you'll admit to the Board that it was your idea. That's what your goddamn Rearden Metal has done to us! If we had waited for Orren Boyle " His unshaved face was pulled by a twisted scramble of emotions panic hatred a touch of triumph, the relief of screaming at a victim—and the hunt, cautious, begging look that sees a hope of help

He had stopped tentatively, but she did not answer She stood watching him, her hands in the pockets of her coat

"There's nothing we can do now!" he moaned I tried to call Washington, to get them to seize the Phoenix Durango and turn over to us, on the ground of emergency, but they won't even discuss it! Too many people objecting, they say, afraid of some sort of precedent or another! . . . I got the National Alliance of Railroads to suspend the deadline and permit Dan Conway to operate his road for another year—that would have given us time—

but he's refused to do it! I tried to get Ellis Wyatt and his bunch of friends in Colorado to demand that Washington order Conway to continue operations—but all of them, Wyatt and all the rest of those bastards, refused! It's *their* skin, worse than ours, they're sure to go down the drain—but they've refused!"

She smiled briefly, but made no comment

"Now there's nothing left for us to do! We're caught We can't give up that branch and we can't complete it We can't stop or go on We have no money Nobody will touch us with a ten foot pole! What have we got left without the Rio Norte Line? But we can't finish it. We'd be boycotted We'd be blacklisted That union of track workers would sue us They would, there's a law about it. We can't complete that Line! Christ! What are we going to do?"

She waited. Through Jim?' she asked coldly "If you are, I'll tell you what we're going to do"

He kept silent, looking up at her from under his heavy eyelids

"This is not a proposal Jim It's an ultimatum Just listen and accept I am going to complete the construction of the Rio Norte Line I personally not Ta
of absence from the job
in my own name Your B
me I will act as my owr
I will take full charge ai
Line on time After you have seen how the Rearden Metal rails can take it, I will transfer the Line back to Taggart Transcontinental and I'll return to my job That is all."

He was looking at her silently, dangling a bedroom slipper on the tip of his foot. She had never supposed that hope could look ugly in a man's face but it did it was mixed with cunning She turned her eyes away from him wondering how it was possible that a man's first thought in such a moment could be a search for something to put over on her

Then, preposterously the first thing he said, his voice anxious, was, "But who will run Taggart Transcontinental in the meantime?"

She chuckled the sound astonished her, it seemed old in its bitterness She said "Eddie Willers."

"Oh no! He couldn't!"

She laughed in the same brusque, mirthless way "I thought you were smarter than I about things of this kind Eddie will assume the title of Acting Vice President He will occupy my office and sit at my desk But who do you suppose will run Taggart Transcontinental?"

"But I don't see how—"

"I will commute by plane between Eddie's office and Colorado Also, there are long-distance phones available I will do just what I have been doing Nothing will change, except the kind of show you will put on for your friends . . . and the fact that it will be a little harder for me."

"What show?"

You understand me, Jim I have no idea what sort of games i're tangled in, you and your Board of Directors I don't know v many ends you're all playing against the middle and against : another, or how many pretenses you have to keep up in how ny opposite directions I don't know or care You can all hide und me If you're all afraid, because you ve made deals with :nds who're threatened by Rearden Metal—well, here s your ince to go through the motions of assuring them that you re involved, that you're not doing this—*I* am You can help them to se me and denounce me You can all stay home, take no risks and ke no enemies Just keep out of my way"

'Well " he said slowly, "of course, the problems involved the policy of a great railroad system are complex while mall, independent company, in the name of one person, could ord to—"

'Yes Jim yes, I know all that. The moment you announce that ire turning the Rio Norte Line over to me the Taggart stock l rise The bedbugs will stop crawling from out of unlikely cor s since they won t have the incentive of a big company to bite fore they decide what to do about me I will have the Line fin-ed And as for me, I don't want to have you and your Board to ount to, to argue with, to beg permissions from There isn t time for that, if I am to do the kind of job that has to be done I'm going to do it alone"

'And if you fail?"

'If I fail, I'll go down alone"

'You understand that in such case Taggart Transcontinental will t be able to help you in any way?"

'I understand"

'You will not count on us?"

'No"

'You will cut all official connection with us, so that your activi-s will not reflect upon our reputation?"

'Yes"

'I think we should agree that in case of failure or public scan . your leave of absence will become permanent that you will not expect to return to the post of Vice President"

She closed her eyes for a moment. 'All right, Jim In such case, will not return."

"Before we transfer the Rio Norte Line to you we must have written agreement that you will transfer it back to us along with ur controlling interest at cost, in case the Line becomes success l. Otherwise you might try to squeeze us for a windfall profit, ke we need that Line"

There was only a brief stab of shock in her eyes then she said ifferently, the words sounding as if she were tossing alms, y all means Jim Have that stated in writing."

"Now as to your temporary successor "

"Yes?"

"You don t really want it to be Eddie Willers, do you?"

"Yes. I do."

'But he couldn't even *act* like a vice president! He doesn't hav the presence, the manner, the—"

'He knows his work and mine. He knows what I want. I tru him I'll be able to work with him."

'Don't you think it would be better to pick one of our mor distinguished young men, somebody from a good family, wit more social poise and—'

"It's going to be Eddie Willers, Jim"

He sighed "All right Only only we must be careful abo it . We don't want people to suspect that it's you who're sti running Taggart Transcontinental Nobody must know it"

"Everybody will know it, Jim But since nobody will admit openly, everybody will be satisfied"

"But we must preserve appearances"

"Oh, certainly! You don t have to recognize me on the street, you don t want to You can say you've never seen me before an I'll say I've never heard of Taggart Transcontinental"

He remained silent, trying to think, staring down at the floo She turned to look at the grounds beyond the window Th sky had the even, gray white pallor of winter Far below, on th shore of the Hudson, she saw the road she used to watch fo Francisco s car—she saw the cliff over the river, where they climbe to look for the towers of New York—and somewhere beyond th woods were the trails that led to Rockdale Station The earth wa snow-covered now, and what remained was like the skeleton of th countryside she remembered—a thin design of bare branches risin from the snow to the sky It was gray and white, like a photograp a dead photograph which one keeps hopefully for remembranc but which has no power to bring back anything

"What are you going to call it?"

She turned startled "What?'

"What are you going to call your company?"

"Oh . Why, the Dagny Taggart Line, I guess"

"But Do you think that s wise? It might be misunderstoo The *Taggart* might be taken as—"

"Well, what do you want me to call it?' she snapped, wor down to anger "The Miss Nobody? The Madam X? The Joh Galt?" She stopped She smiled suddenly, a cold bright, dange ous smile "That s what I m going to call it the John Galt Line

"Good God, no!"

"Yes"

"But it s . . . it s just a cheap piece of slang!"

"Yes"

"You can't make a joke out of such a serious project! . . . Yo can t be so vulgar and and undignified!"

"Can t I?"

"But for God s sake why?"

"Because it s going to shock all the rest of them just as it shocke you"

"I've never seen you playing for effects"

"I am, this time."

t " His voice dropped to an almost superstitious sound ;, Dagny, you know it's it's bad luck. What it for is " He stopped
hat does it stand for?"
don't know But the way people use it, they always to say it out of—"
ar? Despair? Futility?"
es yes that's what it is"
hat's what I want to throw in their faces!"
e bright, sparkling anger in her eyes her first look of enjoy , made him understand that he had to keep still
raw up all the papers and all the red tape in the name of the Galt Line" she said
sighed "Well it's *your* Line"
ou bet it is!"
glanced at her astonished She had dropped the manners and of a vice president she seemed to be relaxing happily to the of yard crews and construction gangs
s to the papers and the legal side of it he said "there might ome difficulties We would have to apply for the permission "

e whirled to face him Something of the bright violent look remained in her face But it was not gay and she was not ing The look now had an odd primitive quality When he saw e hoped he would never have to see it again
Listen, Jim" she said he had never heard that tone in any an voice. "There is one thing you can do as your part of the and you'd better do it keep your Washington boys off See t that they give me all the permissions authorizations charters other waste paper that their laws require Don't let them try top me If they try Jim people say that our ancestor Nat gart, killed a politician
uld never have had to
it or not But I'll tell y
he didn't—I might do t
ad. I mean it, Jim"

* *

Francisco d'Anconia sat in front of her desk His face was blank had remained blank while Dagny explained to him in the clear personal tone of a business interview the formation and purpose her own railroad company He had listened He had not pronounced a word
She had never seen his face wear that look of drained passivity ere was no mockery no amusement no antagonism it was as if d not belong in these particular moments of existence and could t be reached Yet his eyes looked at her attentively they seemed see more than she could suspect they made her think of one- y glass they let all light rays in but none out
"Francisco I asked you to come here because I wanted you to e me in my office You've never seen it It would have mething to you, once"

His eyes moved slowly to look at the office Its walls were bar except for three things a map c original drawing of Nat Taggart statue—and a large railroad caler the kind that was distributed e picture to every station along the Taggart track, ... had hung once in her first work place at Rockdale

He got up He said quietly Dagny, for your own sake and" it was a barely perceptible hesitation—"and in the name of a pity you might feel for me dont request what you're going request Dont Let me go now"

This was not like him and like nothing she could ever have pected to hear from him After a moment she asked Why?

"I can't answer you I can t answer any questions That is one the reasons why it s best not to discuss it."

"You know what I am going to request?"

"Yes" The way she looked at him was such an eloquent, d perate question, that he had to add, I know that I am going refuse"

"Why?"

He smiled mirthlessly spreading his hands out, as if to sh her that this was what he had predicted and had wanted to av

She said quietly "I have to try, Francisco I have to make request Thats my part What you'll do about it is yours I I'll know that I ve tried everything"

He remained standing but he inclined his head a little, assent and said I will listen if that will help you"

"I need fifteen million dollars to complete the Rio Norte Li I have obtained seven million against the Taggart stock I own f and clear I can raise nothing else I will issue bonds in the na of my new company in the amount of eight million dollars called you here to ask you to buy these bonds"

He did not answer

"I am simply a beggar Francisco and I am begging you money I had always thought that one did not beg in business thought that one stood on the merit of what one had to of and gave value for value This is not so any more though I d understand how we can act on any other rule and continue exist. Judging by every objective fact, the Rio Norte Line is to the best railroad ... buy the bonds of my company So I cant plead merit. I only plead"

Her voice was pronouncing the words with impersonal precis She stopped waiting for his answer He remained silent.

"I know that I have nothing to offer you" she said "I c speak to you in terms of investment You dont care to make mo Industrial projects have ceased to concern you long ago So I w pretend that its a fair exchange Its just begging" She drew

th and said "Give me that money as alms because it means ing to you"

Don't" he said his voice low She could not tell whether the ige sound of it was pain or anger his eyes were lowered.

Will you do it, Francisco?

No"

fter a moment she said "I called you not because I thought would agree but because you were the only one who could erstand what I am saying So I had to try it Her voice was pping lower as if she hoped it would make emotion harder to ct. "You see I can t believe that you re really gone be se I know that you re still able to hear me The way you live is raved But the way you act is not Even the way you speak of it iot. I had to try But I can t struggle to understand you longer"

"I'll give you a hint. Contradictions do not exist Whenever you ik that you are facing a contradiction check your premises u will find that one of them is wrong"

'Francisco" she whispered, why don t you tell me what it was t happened to you?"

'Because at this moment the answer would hurt you more in the doubt

"Is it as terrible as that?"

"It is an answer wh ch you must reach by yourself"

She shook her head "I don t know what to offer you I don t see that even e reason why at one

it, it meant a great deal to you—success Industrial success Remember how we used to talk about it? You were very severe You xpected a lot from me You told me I d better live up to it I have ou wondered how far I d rise with Taggart Transcontinental" She oved her hand pointing at the office. Th s is how far I ve ben f what had been your as amusement or a g flowers on a grave in the name of

"No"

She said with effort "That money would mean nothing to you—you've wasted that much on senseless parties—you've wasted much more on the San Sebastián Mines—

He glanced up He looked straight at her and she saw the first mark of a living response in his eyes a look that was bright piti less and incred'bly proud as if this were an accusat on that gave him strength.

"Oh, yes," she said slowly as if answering h s thought "I realize that. I've damned you for those mines I've denounced you I've thrown my contempt at you in every way possible and now I come back to you—for money Like Jim like any moocher you ve ever met. I know it s a triumph for you, I know that you can laugh

at me and
you that. If
and the M ·
me? Woulc
acknowledge that I'm beaten by you? Don't you want to see
crawling before you? Tell me what form of it you'd like and I
submit"

He moved so swiftly that she could not notice how he started,
only seemed to her that his first movement was a shudder
came around the desk, he took her hand and raised it to his li
It began as a gesture of the gravest respect, as if its purpose we
to give her strength, but as he held his lips, then his face, pressed
her hand, she knew that he was seeking strength from it himse

He dropped her hand he looked down at her face, at the frig
ened stillness of her eyes, he smiled, not trying to hide that
smile held suffering, anger and tenderness.

"Dagny, you want to crawl? You don't know what the wo
means and never will One doesn't crawl by acknowledging it
honestly as that Don't you suppose I know that your begging
was the bravest thing you could do? But . . . Don't ask
Dagny"

"In the name of anything I ever meant to you . . ." she wh
pered, 'anything left within you ."

In the moment when she thought that she had seen this l
before, that this was the way he had looked against the night g
of the city, when he lay in bed by her side for the last time—
heard his cry, the kind of cry she had never torn from him bef

"My love, I can't!"

Then as the [illegible]

casual

"Please excuse the mixture in styles of expression I've been
posed to say that to so many women, but on somewhat diffe
occasions"

Her head dropped, she sat huddled tight together, not caring
he saw it.

When she raised her head, she looked at him indifferently
right, Francisco It was a good act I did believe it If that was
own way of having the kind of fun I was offering you, you
ceeded I won't ask you for anything"

"I warned you"

"I didn't know which side you belonged on It didn't seem
sible—but it's the side of Orren Boyle and Bertram Scudder
your old teacher"

"My old teacher?" he [illegible]

? He's the looter who
y means" He added,
[illegible] which side you sal

ome day I'll remind you of it and ask you whether you'll to repeat it."

ou won't have to remind me"

turned to go He tossed his hand in a casual salute and "If it could be built, I d wish good luck to the Río Norte

s going to be built. And its going to be called the John Galt

'hat?!"

was an actual scream she chuckled derisively "The John Line"

agny in heavens name why?"

on't you like it?"

low d d you happen to choose that?"

t sounds better than Mr Nemo or Mr Zero doesn't it?"

agny why that?"

ecause it frightens you"

What do you think it stands for?"

The impossible The unattainable And you re all afraid of my just as you re afraid of that name"

e started laughing He laughed not looking at her and she strangely certain that he had forgotten her that he was far y that he was laughing—in furious gaiety and bitterness—at ething in which she had no part.

hen he turned to her he said earnestly "Dagny I wouldn t, were you"

he shrugged "Jim didn t like it, either"

What do you like about it?

I hate it! I hate the doom you re all waiting for the giving and that senseless question that always sounds like a cry for p I'm sick of hearing pleas for John Galt. I m going to fight ."

He said quietly, "You are."

"I'm going to build a railroad line for him. Let h m come and m it!"

He smiled sadly and nodded "He will"

* *

The glow of poured steel streamed across the ceil ng and broke inst one wall Rearden sat at his desk in the l ght of a single mp Beyond its circle the darkness of the office blended with e darkness outside He felt as if it were empty space where the of the furnaces moved at will as if the desk were a raft hang g in mid-air hold ng two persons imprisoned in privacy Dagny t in front of his desk.

Sh had thrown her coat off and she sat outl ned against it, a n, tense body in a gray suit, leaning diagonally across the wide mchair Only her hand lay in the light on the edge of the desk yond it, he saw the pale suggestion of her face the wh te of a ouse the triangle of an open collar

"All right Hank," she said "we re going ahead with a new

Rearden Metal bridge This is the official order of the official own of the John Galt Line"

th
s I

Yes You don't need my comments or compliments the ... says it."

"Very well Thank you I'll start rolling the Metal."

Don t you want to ask whether the John Galt Line is in a po tion to place orders or to function?

I don't need to Your coming here says it"

She smiled 'True Its all set Hank. I came to tell you that ... to discuss the details of the bridge in person.

"All right *I am* curious who are the bondholders of the Jo Galt Line?

"I dont think any of them could afford it. All of them ha growing enterprises All of them needed their money for their o concerns But they needed the Line and they did not ask any for help She took a paper out of her bag "Heres John Galt, In she said handing it across the desk.

He knew most of the names on the list Ellis Wyatt, Wyatt (Colorado Ted Nielsen Nielsen Motors Colorado Lawrence H mond Hammond Cars Colorado Andrew Stockton, Stock Foundry Colorado There were a few from other states he ticed the name "Kenneth Danagger Danagger Coal Pennsylvani The amounts of their subscriptions varied from sums in five fig to six

He reached for his fountain pen, wrote at the bottom of the "Henry Rearden Rearden Steel Pennsylvania—$1 000 000" tossed the list back to her

"Hank she said quietly I d dnt want you in on this You invested so much in Rearden Metal that its worse for you t for any of us You cant afford another risk"

I never accept favors" he answered coldly

"What do you mean?"

"I don't ask people to take greater chances on my ventures t I take myself If its a gamble Ill match anybodys gambl D dnt you say that that track was my first showcase?"

She inclined her head and sa d gravely All right. Thank y

"*Incidentally* I dont expect to lose this money I am awar the cond tions under which these bonds can be converted stock at my option. I therefore expect to make an inordinate prof and youre going to earn it for me."

She laughed "God Hank I've spoken to so many yellow f that they've almost infected me into thinking of the Line as hopeless loss! Thanks for remind ng me. Yes I think I'll earn inord nate profit for you"

"If it werent for the yellow fools there wouldnt be any in it at all But we have to beat them We will" He reached two telegrams from among the papers on his desk "There are

not in existence." He extended the telegrams. "I think
like to see these."

e of them read "I had intended to retire in two years,
he statement of the State Science Institute compels me to re-
at once. Consider this a commitment for the construction of
nch pipe line of Rearden Metal, 600 miles, Colorado to Kan-
ity Details follow Ellis Wyatt."

e other read "Re our discussion of my order. Go ahead. Ken
gger."

added, in explanation, "He wasn't prepared to proceed at
either. It's eight thousand tons of Rearden Metal. Structural
. For coal mines."

ey glanced at each other and smiled. They needed no further
ment.

glanced down, as she handed the telegrams back to him. The
of her hand looked transparent in the light, on the edge of his
a young girl's hand with long, thin fingers, relaxed for a
ent, defenseless.

The Stockton Foundry in Colorado," she said, "is going to finish
order for me—the one that the Amalgamated Switch and Signal
pany ran out on. They're going to get in touch with you about
Metal."

They have already. What have you done about the construction
s?"

Healy's engineers are staying on, the best ones, those I need.
d most of the foremen, too. It won't be too hard to keep them
g. Healy wasn't of much use, anyway."

"What about labor?"

"More applicants than I can hire. I don't think the union is
g to interfere. Most of the applicants are giving phony names
ey're union members. They need the work desperately. I'll
e a few guards on the Line, but I don't expect any trouble."

"What about your brother Jim's Board of Directors?"

"They're all scrambling to get statements into the newspapers
the effect that they have no connection whatever with the John
Line and how reprehensible an undertaking they think it is.
hey agreed to everything I asked."

The line of her shoulders looked taut, yet thrown back easily,
d poised for flight. Tension seemed natural to her, not a sign
f anxiety, but a sign of enjoyment, the tension of her whole body,
nder the gray suit, half visible in the darkness.

"Eddie Willers has taken over the office of Operating Vice-
President," she said. "If you need anything, get in touch with him.
I'm leaving for Colorado tonight."

"Tonight?"

"Yes. We have to make up time. We've lost a week."

"Flying your own plane?"

"Yes. I'll be back in about ten days. I intend to be in New York
once or twice a month."

"Where will you live out there?"

On the site In my own railway car—that is Eddie s car wh I m borrowing"

Will you be safe?"

Safe from what? Then she laughed startled "Why Hank, t the first time you ve ever thought that I wasn t a man Of cour I'll be safe

He was not looking at her he was looking at a sheet of figures his desk I ve had my er

of the bridge he said

struction time required T

He extended the papers

A wedge of light fell

mouth in sharp outline T

only a suggestion of its shape and the dark lines of her lowe lashes

Haven t I?—he thought Haven't I thought of it since the fi time I saw you? Haven t I thought of nothing else for two yea

He sat motionless looking at her He heard the words he ha never allowed himself to form the words he had felt known

be sa

as if I

you

Nothing but your body that mouth of yours and the way yo eyes would look at me if Through every sentence I ev said to you through every conference you thought so safe throu the importance of all the issues we discussed You trusted m didn t you? To recognize your greatness? To think of you as y deserved—as if you were a man? Don t you suppose I kno how much I ve betrayed? The only bright encounter of my life the *only* person I respected—the best businessman I know—m ally—my partner in a desperate battle The lowest of a desires—as my answer to the highest I ve met Do you kno what I am? I thought of it because it should have been unthinkab *For that* degrading need which should never touch you I ha never wanted anyone but you I hadn t known what it w like to want it until I saw you for the first time I had though Not I I couldn t be broken by it Since then for tw years *with* not a moment s respite Do you know wh it's like to want it? Would you wish to hear what I thought wh I looked at you when I lay awake at night when heard your vo ce over a telephone wire when I worke but could not drive it away? To bring *you* down to tha you can t conceive—and to know that it s I who have done it T reduce you to a body to teach you an animal s pleasure to see y need it to see you asking me for it to see your wonderful spi dependent upon the obscenity of your need To watch you as y are as you face the world with your clean proud strength—then see you in my bed submitting to any infamous whim I may d vise to any act wh ch I'll perform for the sole purpose of watchin your dishonor and to which you'll submit for the sake of an u

able sensation . . . I want you—and may I be damned !

: was reading the papers, leaning back in the darkness—he the reflection of the fire touching her hair, moving to her der, down her arm, to the naked skin of her wrist.

Do you know what I'm thinking now, in this moment? Your gray suit and your open collar you look so young, stere, so sure of yourself What would you be like if I ked your head back, if I threw you down in that formal suit ours if I raised your skirt—

e glanced up at him He looked down at the papers on his . In a moment, he said, "The actual cost of the bridge s than our original estimate You will note that the strength e bridge allows for the eventual addition of a second track, h I think, that section of the country will justify in a very few s If you spread the cost over a period of—"

e spoke, and she looked at his face in the lamplight, against black emptiness of the office The lamp was outside her field sion, and she felt as if it were his face that illuminated the rs on the desk His face, she thought, and the cold, radiant clar- of his voice, of his mind, of his drive to a single purpose The was like his words—as if the line of a single theme ran from steady glance of the eyes, through the gaunt muscles of the ks, to the faintly scornful, downward curve of the mouth— the of a ruthless asceticism.

* *

he day began with the news of a disaster a freight train of the antic Southern had crashed head-on into a passenger train, New Mexico, on a sharp curve in the mountains scattering ght cars all over the slopes The cars carried five thousand s of copper, bound from a mine in Arizona to the Rearden ls.

Rearden telephoned the general manager of the Atlantic Southern, the answer he received was "Oh God, Mr Rearden, how can tell? How can anybody tell how long it will take to clear that eck? One of the worst we've ever had I don't know, Mr arden. There are no other lines anywhere in that section. The ck is torn for twelve hundred feet. There's been a rockslide r wrecking train can't get through. I don't know how we'll ever t those freight cars back on rails, or when. Can't expect it sooner an two weeks *Three days?* Impossible, Mr Rearden! . . ut we can't help it! But surely you can tell your customers at it's an act of God! What if you do hold them up? Nobody n blame you in a case of this kind"

In the next two hours, with the assistance of his secretary, two oung engineers from his shipping department, a road map, and he long-distance telephone, Rearden arranged for a fleet of trucks proceed to the scene of the wreck, and for a chain of hopper ars to meet them at the nearest station of the Atlantic The hopper cars had been borrowed from Taggart T nental. The trucks had been recruited from all over .

Arizona and Colorado Reardens engineers had hunted by tele-phone for private truck owners and had offered payments that cut all arguments short

It was the third of three shipments of copper that Rearden had expected two orders had not been delivered one company had gone out of business the other was still pleading delays that it could not help

He had attended to the matter without breaking his chain of appointments without raising his voice, without sign of strain uncertainty or apprehension, he had acted with the swift precision of a military commander under sudden fire—and Gwen Ives his secretary had acted as his calmest lieutenant She was a girl in her late twenties whose quietly harmonious impenetrable face had a quality matching the best-designed office equipment she was one of his most ruthlessly competent employees, her manner of performing her duties suggested the kind of rational cleanliness that would consider any element of emotion, while at work, as an unpardonable immorality

When the emergency was over her sole comment was "Mr Rear-den I think we should ask all our suppliers to ship via Taggart Transcontinental" "I m thinking that too," he answered He added "Wire Fleming in Colorado Tell him I m taking an option on that copper mine property"

He was back at his desk speaking to his superintendent on one phone and to his purchasing manager on another, checking every date and ton of ore on hand—he could not leave to chance or to another person the possibility of a single hours delay in the fire of a furnace it was the last of the rail for the John Galt Line that was being poured—when the buzzer rang and Miss Ives' voice announced that his mother was outside demanding to see him.

He had asked his family never to come to the mills without appointment He had been glad that they hated the place and seldom appeared in his office What he now felt was a violent impulse to order his mother off the premises Instead with a greater effort than the problem of the train wreck had required of him he said quietly "All right. Ask her to come in"

His mother came in with an air of belligerent defensiveness She looked at his office as if she knew what it meant to him and as if she were declaring her resentment against anything being of greater importance to him than her own person. She took a long time settling down in an armchair, arranging and rearranging her bag her gloves the folds of her dress while droning "Its a fine thing when a mother has to wait in an anteroom and ask permission of a stenographer before shes allowed to see her own son who—"

"Mother is it anything important? I am very rushed today"

"Youre not the only one whos got problems Of course its important Do you think I d go to the trouble of driving way out here if it wasn t important?"

"What is it?"

"Its about Philip"

"Yes?"

Philip is unhappy"

"Well?"

He feels it's not right that he should have to depend on your ity and live on handouts and never be able to count on a single lar of his own"

"Well!" he said with a startled smile "I've been waiting for him realize that"

"It isn't right for a sensitive man to be in such a position."

"It certainly isn't."

"I'm glad you agree with me So what you have to do is give n a job"

"A . what?"

"You must give him a job, here, at the mills—but a nice, clean of course, with a desk and an office and a decent salary, where wouldn't have to be among your day laborers and your smelly rnaces"

He knew that he was hearing it, he could not make himself lieve it. "Mother, you're not serious"

"I certainly am I happen to know that that's what he wants, only 's too proud to ask you for it But if you offer it to him and ake it look like it's you who're asking him a favor—why, I know 'd be happy to take it That's why I had to come here to talk to u—so he wouldn't guess that I put you up to it"

It was not in the nature of his consciousness to understand the ature of the things he was hearing A single thought cut through s mind like a spotlight, making him unable to conceive how any yes could miss it The thought broke out of him as a cry of be ilderment "But he knows nothing about the steel business!

"What has th [illegible]

[illegible]

"He needs to feel that he's wanted"

"Here? What could I want him for?"

"You hire plenty of strangers"

"I hire men who produce What has he got to offer?"

"He's your brother, isn't he?"

"What has that got to do with it?"

She stared incredulously, in turn, silenced by shock For a moment, they sat looking at each other, as if across an inter planetary distance

"He's your brother," she said, her voice like a phonograph record repeating a magic formula she could not permit herself to doubt "He needs a position in the world He needs a salary so that he'd feel that he's got money coming to him as his due not as alms"

"As his due? But he wouldn't be worth a nickel to me

"Is that what you think of first? Your profit? I'm asking you to help your brother, and you're figuring how to make a nickel on him and you won't help him unless there's money in it for *you*—is that it?" She saw the expression of his eyes, and she looked away,

but spoke hastily, her voice rising "Yes, sure, you're helping him— like you'd help any stray beggar *Material* help—that's all you know or understand Have you thought about his *spiritual* needs ... He doesn't want

... for work

"You'd never miss it You've got enough people here who're making money for you"

"Are you asking me to help him stage a fraud of that kind?"

"You don't have to put it that way"

"Is it a fraud—or isn't it?

"That's why I can't talk to you—because you're not human You have no pity, no feeling for your brother, no compassion for his feelings"

"Is it a fraud or not?"

"You have no mercy for anybody"

"Do you think that a fraud of this kind would be just?"

You're the most immoral man living—you think of nothing but justice! You don't feel any love at all!'

... abrupt and stressed the movement of ... "Mother,

... language,

nothing more

"Don't ever speak to me again about a job for Philip I would not give him the job of a cinder sweeper I would not allow him inside my mills I want you to understand that, once and for all You may try to help him in any way you wish, but don't ever let me see you thinking of my mills as a means to that end"

The wrinkles of her soft chin trickled into a shape resembling a sneer "What are they your mills—a holy temple of some kind?"

"Why yes" he said softly, astonished at the thought.

"Don't you ever think of people and of your moral duties?"

"I don't know what it is that you choose to call morality No I don't think of people—except that if I gave a job to Philip, I wouldn't be able to face any competent man who needed work and deserved it"

... and the right

If a man *deserves* a job, there's no virtue in giving it to him ...

... tmare, ...

... " he sa...

... le ever ...

despise you enough to believe that you mean it"

The look on her face astonished him more than all the rest It w...

his life

he man did not state it in such terms but Rearden knew that was the essence of the case What the man put into words was a plea for five hundred tons of steel

le was Mr Ward of the Ward Harvester Company of Minnesota vas an unpretentious company with an unblemished reputation, kind of business concern that seldom grows large but never

[illegible]

... left in the country I don t know what reason to offer ou as to why you should want to make an exception in my case ut there was nothing else for me to do except close the doors of my ant for good, and I"—there was a slight break in his voice— I an't quite see my way to closing the doors as yet so I ought I'd speak to you even if I didn t have much chance ll I had to try everything possible"

This was language that Rearden could understand "I wish I could elp you out," he said, "but this is the worst possible time for me ecause of a very large, very special order that has to take preced nce over everything"

"I know But would you just give me a hearing Mr Rearden?"

"Sure"

"If it s a question of money I'll pay anything you ask If I could make it worth your while that way why charge me any extra you please charge ...

are bound to improve, they've got to or else we'll—" He did not finish He said firmly, 'They've got to"

"They will," said Rearden

[illegible]

as if miles apart across the country, he and Dagny Taggart now stood in empty space, their way cleared, free to finish the job They'll leave us alone to do it, he thought. The words were like a battle hymn in his mind They'll leave us alone

"Our plant capacity is one thousand harvesters per year," said Mr Ward Last year, we put out three hundred I scraped the steel together from bankruptcy sales, and begging a few tons here and there from big companies, and just going around like a scavenger to all sorts of unlikely places—well, I won't bore you with that, only I never thought I'd live to see the time when I'd have to do business that way And all the while Mr Orren Boyle was swearing to me that he was going to deliver the steel next week But whatever he managed to pour it went to new customers of his for some reason nobody would mention, only I heard it whispered that they were men with some sort of political pull And now I can't even get to Mr Boyle at all He's in Washington, been there for over a month And all his office tells me is just that they can't help it, because they can't get the ore"

"Don't waste your time on them," said Rearden "You'll never [illegible]

[illegible] everybody Now Mr Boyle's got a radio program, [illegible]

"Y[illegible]

abou[illegible] It

not t[illegible] and I don't think it would be right if it were true So I'[illegible] say that what I need the steel for is to save my own business B[illegible]cause it's mine Because if I had to close it . . . oh well, nobod[illegible] understands that nowadays"

"I do"

"Yes Yes I think you would. . . So, you see that's m[illegible] first concern But still there are my customers too They've dea[illegible] with me for years They're counting on me It's just about impossib[illegible] to get any sort of machinery anywhere Do you know what it's ge[illegible]

o be like, out in Minnesota, when the farmers can't get tools, machines break down in the middle of the harvest season ... Mr Orren ... there ... my ... ut of ... duled

lvance for urgent orders, for the next six months But ... The Galt Line, he thought If he could do that, he could do any- ... He felt as if he wished to undertake ten new problems ... ace He felt as if this were a world where nothing was impos- to him

Look," he said, reaching for the telephone, "let me check with superintendent and see just what we're pouring in the next few ks. Maybe I'll find a way to borrow a few tons from some of orders and—"

Mr Ward looked quickly away from him, but Rearden had caught glimpse of his face It's so much for him, thought Rearden, and little for me!

r steps should sound a shred of discipline away from staggering e said, "Excuse me for interrupting, Mr Rearden," but he knew at she did not see the office, did not see Mr Ward saw nothing t him "I thought I must tell you that the Legislature has just ssed the Equalization of Opportunity Bill"

It was the stolid Mr Ward who screamed "Oh God, no! Oh, no!" staring at Rearden.

Rearden had leaped to his feet He stood unnaturally bent, one houlder ... instant Then he looked ... "Excuse me" his glance ... and sat down again

... not informed that the Bill had been brought to the floor were we?" he asked, his voice controlled and dry

"No, Mr Rearden Apparently, it was a surprise move and it took them just forty five minutes"

"Have you heard from Mouch?"

"No, Mr Rearden" She stressed the no "It was the office boy from the fifth floor who came running in to tell me that he'd just heard it on the radio I called the newspapers to verify it I tried to reach Mr Mouch in Washington His office does not answer"

"When did we hear from him last?"

"Ten days ago, Mr Rearden"

"All right. Thank you, Gwen Keep trying to get his office"

"Yes, Mr Rearden."

She walked out. Mr. Ward was on his feet, hat in hand He ...ered, "I guess I'd better—"

'Sit down!" Rearden snapped fiercely.

Mr Ward obeyed, staring at him.

"We had business to transact, didn't we?" said Rearden. Mr Ward could not define the emotion that contorted Rearden's mouth as he spoke "Mr Ward, what is it that the foulest bastards on earth denounce us for, among other things? Oh yes, for our motto of 'Business as usual' Well—business as usual, Mr Ward!"

He picked up the telephone receiver and asked for his superintendent 'Say, Pete What? Yes, I've heard Can it. We'll talk about that later What I want to know is, could you let me have five hundred tons of steel, extra, above schedule, in the next few weeks? Yes, I know . . I know it's tough Give me the dates and the figures" He listened, rapidly jotting notes down on a sheet of paper Then he said, "Right Thank you," and hung up

He studied the figures for a few moments, making some brief calculations on the margin of the sheet Then he raised his head.

"All right, Mr Ward,' he said "You will have your steel in ten days '

When Mr Ward had gone, Rearden came into the anteroom. He said to Miss Ives, his voice normal, 'Wire Fleming in Colorado. He'll know why I have to cancel that option" She inclined her head, in the manner of a nod signifying obedience She did not look at him

He turned to his next caller and said, with a gesture of invitation toward his office, "How do you do Come in"

He would think of it later, he thought, one moves step by step and one must keep moving For the moment, with an unnatural clarity, with a brutal simplification that made it almost easy, his consciousness contained nothing but one thought It must not stop me The sentence hung alone, with no past and no future He did not think of what it was that must not stop him, or why this sentence was such a crucial absolute It held him and he obeyed He went step by step He completed his schedule of appointments, as scheduled.

It was late [illegible] out of his office [illegible] one at her desk in [illegible] ds clasped tightly [illegible] but he'[illegible] rigidly level, and her face seemed frozen Tears were running down her cheeks with no sound with no facial movement, against her resistance, beyond control

She saw [illegible] m sorry, Mr Rearden," [illegible] her face

He appr[illegible]

She look[illegible]

He smil[illegible] Gwen? Ist [illegible] timating me

"I could have taken the rest of it," she whispered, "but they"—she pointed at the newspapers on her desk— they're calling it a victory for anti greed"

laughed aloud "I can see where such a distortion of the sh language would make you furious," he said "But what else?"

she looked at him, her mouth relaxed a little The victim n she could not protect was her only point of reassurance in a d dissolving around her

moved his hand gently across her forehead, it was an unusual k of formality for him, and a silent acknowledgment of the s at which he had not laughed "Go home, Gwen. I won t need tonight I m going home myself in just a little while No, I don't t you to wait."

was past midnight, when, still sitting at his desk, bent over blue-ts of the bridge for the John Galt Line, he stopped his work ptly, because emotion reached him in a sudden stab, not to be ped any longer, as if a curtain of anesthesia had broken

le slumped down, halfway, still holding onto some shred of re-ance, and sat, his chest pressed to the edge of the desk to stop , his head hanging down, as if the only achievement still pos-e to him was not to let his head drop down on the desk. He sat t way for a few moments, conscious of nothing but pain, a eaming pain without content or limit—he sat not knowing ether it was in his mind or his body, reduced to the terrible ness of pain that stopped thought

In a few moments, it was over He raised his head and sat up ight, quietly, leaning back against his chair Now he saw that in

[illegible]

y piece out of him, he was to have no voice, no purpose, no y no defense

He thought of this in astonishment He saw for the first time that had never known fear because, against any disaster, he had held e omnipotent cure of being able to act No, he thought, not an surance of victory—who can ever have that?—only the chance act, which is all one needs Now he was contemplating, im-ersonally and for the first time, the real heart of terror being elivered to destruction with one s hands tied behind one's back.

Well, then, go on with your hands tied, he thought Go on in hains. Go on It must not stop you But another voice was elling him things he did not want to hear, while he fought back, rying through and against it There's no point in thinking of that there s no use . . . what for? . leave it alone!

He could not choke it off He sat still, over the drawings of the bridge for the John Galt Line, and heard the things released by a voice that was part-sound, part-sight They decided it without him. . They did not call for him, they did not ask, they did not let him speak. They were not bound even by the duty to let him know—to let him know that they had slashed part of his life away and that he had to be ready to walk on as a cripple . . . Of

those concerned, whoever they were, for whichever reason, whatever need, *he* was the one they had not had to consider

The sign at the end of a long road said Rearden Ore It fr over black tiers of metal . and over years and nights . . o a clock ticking drops of his blood away . . the blood he had g gladly, exultantly in payment for a distant day and a sign ove road . paid for with his effort, his strength, his mind, his h

Destroyed at the whim of some men who sat and voted Who knows by what minds? Who knows whose will had pla them in power?—what motive moved them?—what was t knowledge?—which one of them, unaided, could bring a chunk ore out of the earth? Destroyed at the whim of men whom had never seen and who had never seen those tiers of metal . Destroyed, because they so decided By what right?

He shook his head There are things one must not contempl he thought There is an obscenity of evil which contaminates observer There is a limit to what it is proper for a man to He must not think of this or look within it, or try to learn nature of its roots

Feeling quiet and empty he told himself that he would be all r tomorrow He would forgive himself the weakness of this night

and still, he saw feeble snatches of red above black funnels, k coils of steam, webbed diagonals of cranes and bridges

He felt a desolate loneliness, of a kind he had never known fore He thought that Gwen Ives and Mr Ward could look to h for hope, for relief, for renewal of courage To whom could look for it? He, too, needed it, for once He wished he had a fri who could be permitted to see him suffer, without pretense protection, on whom he could lean for a moment, just to s "I'm very tired," and find a moment's rest Of all the men he kn was there one he wished he had beside him now? He heard answer in his mind, immediate and shocking Francisco d'Ancon

His chuckle of anger brought him back The absurdity of ht, w

t hear

Rear

had

done it? Why should he ever want to do anything again? . . .

thought that a bridge could be made to carry incredible loads . . . a few bars of metal, if one . . . rch

nin

In the next moment, he was at his desk, bending over it, with e knee on the seat of the chair, with no time to think of sitting wn, he was drawing lines, curves, triangles, columns of calcula-ns, indiscriminately on the blueprints, on the desk blotter, on mebody's letters

th that! Never mind the looters and their laws! Forget it! Dagny, hat do we care! Listen, you know the contraption you called the earden Truss, that you admired so much? It's not worth a damn re figured out a truss that will beat anything ever built! Your

ull it to you."

Chapter VIII THE JOHN GALT LINE

The worker smiled, looking at Eddie Willers across the table "I feel like a fugitive," said Eddie Willers "I guess you know why I haven't been here for months?" He pointed at the under-ground cafeteria "I'm supposed to be a vice-president now The Vice-President in Charge of Operation For God's sake, don't take it seriously I stood it as long as I could, and then I had to escape, if only for one evening . . . The first time I came down here for dinner, after my alleged promotion, they all stared at me so much, I didn't dare come back. Well, let them stare You don't I'm glad that it doesn't make any difference to you No I haven't

know what I mean. She enjoys running that horrible battle single-handed and winning

selves fast enough for old trolley-car rails Still there's hope The United Locomotive Works went bankrupt That's the best break we've had in the last few weeks because their plant has been bought by Dwight Sanders He's a brilliant young engineer who's got the only good aircraft plant in the country He had to sell

aircraft plant to his brother in order to take over United Locomotive That's on account of the Equalization of Opportunity Bill. Sure it's just a setup between them but can you blame him? Anyway ... United Locomotive Works now ... Yes she's count-ing ... Yes he's crucially im-porta... d a contract with him, for the first ten Diesel engines he'll build When I phoned her that the contract was signed she laughed and said You see? Is there ever any reason to be afraid? She said that because she knows—I've never told her but she knows—that I'm afraid. Yes I am I don't know I wouldn't be afraid if I knew of what I could do something about it But this Tell me don't you really despise me for being Operating Vice-President? But don't you see that it's vicious? What honor? I don't know what it is that I really am a clown a ghost an understudy or just a rotten stooge When I sit in her office in her chair at her desk I feel worse than that I feel like a murderer Sure, I know that I'm supposed to be a stooge for *her*—and that would be an honor—but but I feel as if in some horrible way which I can't quite grasp I'm a stooge for Jim Taggart Why should it be necessary for her to have a stooge? Why does she have to hide? Why did they throw her out of the building? Do you know that she had to move out into a dinky hole in the back alley across from the Express and Baggage Entrance? You ought to take a look at it some time that's the office of John Galt Inc Yet everybody knows ... Why d...

when she's all they've got standing between them and destruction? Why are they torturing her in return for saving their lives? What's the matter with you? Why do you look at me like that?

Yes I guess you understand There's something about all that I can't define and it's something evil That's why I'm afraid I don't think one can get away with it. ... know it's strange but I think they know it too Jim and his crowd and all of them in the building There's something guilty and sneaky about the whole place Guilty and sneaky and dead. Taggart Transcontinental is now like a man who's lost his soul ... who's *betrayed* his soul No she doesn't care Last time she was in New York she came in unexpectedly—I was in my office in *her* office—and suddenly the door opened and there she was ... came in saying Mr Willers I'm looking for a job as a station operator would you give me a chance?' I wanted to damn them but I had to laugh I was so glad to see her and she was laughing so happily She had come straight from the airport—she wore slacks and a flying jacket—she looked wonderful—she'd got windburn ... it looked like a suntan just as if she'd returned from a vacation. She made me remain where I was in her chair and she sat on

and talked about the new bridge of the John Galt Line . . . No, I never asked her why she chose that name. . . . I don't know what it means to her A sort of challenge, I guess . . . I don't know to whom Oh, it doesn't matter, it doesn't mean a thing, there isn't any John Galt, but I wish she hadn't used it I don't like it, do you? . . . You do? You don't sound very happy saying it."

* *

The windows of the offices of the John Galt Line faced a dark alley. Looking up from her desk, Dagny could not see the sky, only the wall of a building rising past her range of vision It was the wall of the great skyscraper of Taggart Transcontinental

Her new headquarters were two rooms on the ground floor of a half-collapsed structure. The structure still stood, but its upper stories were boarded off as unsafe for occupancy Such tenants as it sheltered were half bankrupt, existing, as it did, on the inertia of the momentum of the past.

She liked her new place it saved money The rooms contained no superfluous furniture or people The furniture had come from junk shops The people were the choice best she could find On her brief visits to New York, she had no time to notice the room where she worked, she noticed only that it served its purpose

She did not know what made her stop tonight and look at the thin streaks of rain on the glass of the window, at the wall of the building across the alley

It was past midnight Her small staff had gone She was due at the airport at three A M, to fly her plane back to Colorado She had little left to do, only a few of Eddie's reports to read With the sudden break of the tension of hurrying, she stopped, unable to go on. The reports seemed to require an effort beyond her power. It was too late to go home and sleep, too early to go to the airport. She thought You're tired—and watched her own mood with severe, contemptuous detachment, knowing that it would pass

She had flown to New York unexpectedly, at a moment's notice, leaping to the controls of her plane within twenty minutes after hearing a brief item in a news broadcast The radio voice had said that Dwight Sanders had retired from business, suddenly without reason or explanation She had hurried to New York hoping to find him and stop him But she had felt, while flying across the continent, that there would be no trace of him to find

The spring rain hung motionless in the air beyond the window, like a thin mist. She sat, looking across at the open cavern of the Express and Baggage Entrance of the Taggart Terminal There were naked lights inside, among the steel girders of the ceiling and a few piles of luggage on the worn concrete of the floor The place looked abandoned and dead

She glanced at a jagged crack on the wall of her office She heard no sound She knew she was alone in the ruins of a building It seemed as if she were alone in the city She felt an emotion held in check for years a loneliness much beyond this moment, beyond the silence of the room and the wet, glistening emptiness of the street,

each

the
lines
pane she could see the whole of the Taggart Building its lines converging abruptly to its distant pinnacle in the sky She looked up at the dark window of the room that had been her office She felt as if she were in exile never to return as if she were separated from the building by much more than a sheet of glass a curtain of rain and the span of a few months

plaster pressed to the window
everything she loved
The only words that
d

Once when she was sixteen looking at a long stretch of Taggart track at the rails that converged—like the lines of a skyscraper—to a single point in the distance she had told Eddie Willers that she had always felt as if the rails were held in the hand of a man beyond the horizon—no not her father or any of the men in office—and some day she would meet him

She shook her head and turned away from the window

She went back to her desk She tried to reach for the report But suddenly she was slumped across the desk her head on her arm Don t she thought but she did not move to rise it made no difference there was no one to see her

This was a longing she had never permitted herself to acknowledge She faced it now She thought If emotion is one s response to the things the world has to offer if she loved the rails the building and more if she loved her love for them—there was still one response the greatest that she had missed She thought To find a feeling that would hold as their sum as their final expression the purpose of all the things she loved on earth To find a consciousness like her own, who would be the meaning of her world as she would be of his No not Francisco d Anconia not Hank Rearden not any man she had ever met admired A man who existed only in her knowledge of capacity for an emotion she had never felt but would have given her life to experience She twisted herself in a slow faint movement her breasts pressed to the desk she felt the longing in muscles in the nerves of her body

Is that what you want? Is it as simple as that?—she thought, knew that it was not simple There was some unbreakable link between her love for her work and the desire of her body as if gave her the right to the other the right and the meaning as one were the completion of the other—and the desire would not be satisfied except by a being of equal greatness

Her face pressed to her arm she moved her head shaking slowly in negation She would never find it Her own thought what life could be like was all she would ever have of the world she had wanted Only the thought of it—and a few rare moments like a few lights reflected from it on her way—to know, to follow to the end . . .

e raised her head

to hear him knock Instead she saw the shadow jerk y as if he were jolted backward then he turned and walked There was only the outline of his hat brim and shoulders the ground when he stopped The shadow lay still for a it, wavered and grew longer again as he came back

felt no fear She sat at her desk motionless watching in wonder He stopped at the door then backed away from it od somewhere in the middle of the alley then paced rest and stopped again His shadow swung like an irregular lum across the pavement, describing the course of a sound attle it was a man fighting himself to enter that door or to

looked on, with peculiar detachment. She had no power to only to observe She wondered numbly distantly Who was Had he been watching her from somewhere in the darkness? he seen her slumped across her desk, in the lighted naked ow? Had he watched her desolate loneliness as she was now ing his? She felt nothing They were alone in the silence of a city—it seemed to her that he was miles away a reflection of ing without identity a fellow survivor whose problem was stant to her as hers would be to him He paced moving out r sight, coming back again. She sat watching—on the glistening ment of a dark alley—the shadow of an unknown torment

e shadow moved away once more She waited It did not re- . Then she leaped to her feet. She had wanted to see the out e of the battle now that he had won it—or lost—she was k by the sudden urgent need to know his identity and motive ran through the dark anteroom she threw the door open and ed out.

he alley was empty The pavement went tapering off into the ance, like a band of wet mirror under a few spaced lights re was no one in sight. She saw the dark hole of a broken dow in an abandoned shop Beyond it, there were the doors of ew rooming houses Across the alley streaks of rain glittered ler a light that hung over the black gap of an open door leading wn to the underground tunnels of Taggart Transcontinental.

* *

Rearden signed the papers pushed them across the desk and ked away thinking that he would never have to think of them n, wishing he were carried to the time when this moment uld be far behind him

Paul Larkin reached for the papers hesitantly he looked in ingly helpless "It's only a legal technicality Hank" he d. "You know that I'll always consider these ore mines as yours"

Rearden shook his head slowly it was just a movement of his neck muscles his face looked immovable as if he were speaking to a stranger "No he said Either I own a property or I don't th

But but you know that you can trust me You don't have to worry about your supply of ore We've made an agreement You know that you can count on me"

"I don t know it I hope I can

But I ve given you my word

"I have never been at the mercy of anyone s word before"

"Why why do you say that? We re friends I'll do anything you wish You ll get my entire output The mines are still yours— just as good as yours You have nothing to fear I'll Hank, what s the matter?

Don t talk

But but what s the matter?"

I don t like assurances I don t want any pretense about how safe I am I m not We have made an agreement which I can t enforce I want you to know that I understand my position fully If you intend to keep your word don t talk about it just *do* it"

Why do you look at me as if it were my fault? You know how badly I feel about it I bought the mines only because I thought it would help you out—I mean I thought you d rather sell them to a friend than to some total stranger It s not my fault I don' l ke that miserable Equalization Bill I don t know who s behind i I never dreamed they d pass it it was such a shock to me whe they—

"Never mind"

"But I only—

"Why do you insist on talking about it?"

"I Larkin s voice was pleading I gave you the best pric Hank The law said reasonable compensation ' My bid was high than anyone else s

Rearden looked at the papers still lying across the desk. I thought of the payment these papers gave him for his ore m n Two-thirds of the sum was money which Larkin had obtained a loan from the government the new law made provisions such loans in order to give a fair opportunity to the new own who have never had a chance" Two thirds of the rest was a lo he h mself had granted to Larkin a mortgage he had accepted h s own m nes And the government money he thou suddenly the money now given to him as payment for his pr erty where had that come from? Whose work had provided it?

"You don't have to worry Hank," said Larkin with that comprehensible ins stent note of pleading in his voice "It s a paper formality"

Rearden wondered d mly what it was that Larkin wanted f h m He felt that the man was waiting for something beyond physical fact of the sale some words which he Rearden, was posed to pronounce some action pertaining to mercy wh ch was expected to grant Larkin s eyes in this moment of his fortune, had the sickening look of a beggar

Why should you be angry, Hank? It's only a new form of legal tape Just a new historical condition Nobody can help it, if a historical condition Nobody can be blamed for it But there s ways a way to get along Look at all the others They don't nd. They're—"

"They re setting up stooges whom they control, to run the operties extorted from them I—"

"Now why do you want to use such words?"

"I might as well tell you—and I think you know it—that I am t good at games of that kind I have neither the time nor the omach to devise some form of blackmail in order to tie you up d own my mines through you Ownership is a thing I don t are And I don't wish to hold it by the grace of your cowardice— y means of a constant struggle to outwit you and keep some threat er your head I don't do business that way and I don't deal with owards The mines are yours If you wish to give me first call n all the ore produced, you will do so If you wish to double oss me, it s in your power"

Larkin looked hurt "That s very unfair of you" he said there was a dry little note of righteous reproach in his voice "I have never given you cause to distrust me" He picked up the papers ith a hasty movement.

Rearden saw the papers disappear into Larkin s inside coat pocket. He saw the flare of the open coat, the wrinkles of a vest pulled tight over flabby bulges and a stain of perspiration in the armp t of the shirt.

nsummoned the picture of a face seen twenty-seven years ago suddenly

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Then he saw the boy who had been Hank Rearden at eighteen saw the tension of the face, the speed of the walk, the drunken hilaration of the body, drunk on the energy of sleepless nights, proud lift of the head the clear, steady ruthless eyes the eyes a man who drove himself without pity toward that which he anted. And he saw what Paul Larkin must have been at that me—a youth with an aged baby s face smiling ingratiatingly joy ly begging to be spared, pleading with the universe to give him chance If someone had shown that youth to the Hank Rearden f that time and told him that this was to be the goal of his steps, e collector of the energy of his aching tendons what would he ave—

It was not a thought it was like the punch of a fist inside his ll. Then, when he could think again Rearden knew what the oy he had been would have felt a desire to step on the obscene

thing which was Larkin and grind every wet bit of it out of existence

He had never experienced an emotion of this kind It took him a few moments to realize that this was what men called hatred

He noticed that rising to leave and muttering some sort of good byes, Larkin had a wounded, reproachful, mouth pinched look as if he, Larkin were the injured party

When he sold his coal mines to Ken Danagger, who owned the largest coal company in Pennsylvania, Rearden wondered why he felt as if it were almost painless He felt no hatred Ken Danagger was a man in his fifties, with a hard, closed face, he had started in life as a miner

When Rearden handed to him the deed to his new property Danagger said impassively, I dont believe I've mentioned that any coal you buy from me you'll get it at cost"

Rearden glanced at him astonished 'Its against the law," he said

"Who's going to find out what sort of cash I hand to you in you own living room?

"You re talking about a rebate"

"I am '

"That's against two dozen laws They'll sock you worse than m if they catch you at it

"Sure That s your protection— so you won't be left at the merc of my good will"

Rearden smiled it was a happy smile, but he closed his ey as under a blow Then he shook his head "Thanks,' he said "B I m not one of them I don t expect anybody to work for me cost"

'I'm not one of them either" said Danagger angrily "Look he Rearden don't you suppose I know what I m getting, unearne The money doesn t pay you for it Not nowadays"

"You didn t volunteer to bid to buy my property I asked you buy it I wish there had been somebody like you in the ore busine to take over my mines There wasn t If you want to do me a fav don t offer me rebates Give me a chance to pay you higher pri higher than anyone else will offer sock me anything you wa just so I ll be first to get the coal I'll manage my end of it. O let me have the coal'

"You ll have it"

Rearden wondered for a while, why he heard no word fr Wesley Mouch His calls to Washington remained unanswe Then he received a letter consisting of a single sentence which formed him that Mr Mouch was resigning from his employ T weeks later, he read in the newspapers that Wesley Mouch been appointed Assistant Coordinator of the Bureau of Econo Planning and National Resources

Don t dwell on any of it—thought Rearden, through the sil of many evenings, fighting the sudden access of that new emo which he did not want to feel—there is an unspeakable evi the world, you know it and it s no use dwelling on the detail

ou must work a little harder. Just a little harder Don't let it

ie beams and girders of the Rearden Metal bridge were coming out of the rolling mills, and were being shipped to the site of John Galt Line, where the first shapes of green blue metal, ig into space to span the canyon, glittered in the first rays of spring sun. He had no time for pain, no energy for anger. in a few weeks, it was over; the blinding stabs of hatred ed and did not return

e was back in confident self-control on the evening when he phoned Eddie Willers "Eddie, I'm in New York, at the Wayne-land Come to have breakfast with me tomorrow morning. re's something I'd like to discuss with you"

ddie Willers went to the [illegible]

[illegible]

ted as if it hid the threat of some malicious unknown He aded facing one of the Bill's victims he felt almost as if he, he Willers shared the responsibility for it in some terrible way ich he could not define.

When he saw Rearden, the feeling vanished There was no hint ggesting a victim, in Rearden's bearing Beyond the windows of hotel room, the spring sunlight of early morning sparkled on windows of the city, the sky was a very pale blue that seemed ing the offices were still closed, and the city did not look as if held malice, but as if it were joyously, hopefully ready to swing o action—in the same manner as Rearden He looked refreshed an untroubled sleep, he wore a dressing gown, he seemed im-tient of the necessity to dress, unwilling to delay the exciting ime of his business duties

"Good morning Eddie Sorry if I got you out so early It's the ly time I had. Have to go back to Philadelphia right after break-st. We can talk while we're eating"

The dressing gown he wore was of dark blue flannel, with the hite initials "H R" on the breast pocket. He looked young, re-xed at home in this room and in the world.

Eddie watched a waiter wheel the breakfast table into the room with a swift efficiency that made him feel braced He found him elf enjoying the stiff freshness of the white tablecloth and the unlight sparkling on the silver, on the two bowls of crushed ice holding glasses of orange juice he had not known that such things could give him an invigorating pleasure

"I didn't want to phone Dagny long distance about this particu-lar matter," said Rearden. "She has enough to do We can settle it in a few minutes, you and I"

"If I have the authority to do it"

Rearden smiled "You have" He leaned forward across the table "Eddie, what's the financial state of Taggart Transcontinental at the moment? Desperate?"

"Worse than that, Mr Rearden."

Are you able to meet pay rolls?

"Not quite We ve kept it out of the newspapers but I think everybody knows it We re in arrears all over the system and Jim is running out of excuses '

Do you know that your first payment for the Rearden Metal rail is due next week?"

Yes I know it "

Well lets agree on a moratorium I m going to give you an extension—you won t have to pay me anything until six months after the opening of the John Galt Line

Eddie Willers put down his cup of coffee with a sharp thud He could not say a word

Rearden chuckled What s the matter? You do have the authority to accept don t you?"

Mr Rearden I don t know , what to say to you"

Why just okay is all that s necessary

Okay Mr Rearden Eddie s voice was barely audible

I ll draw up the papers and send them to you You can tell Jim about it and have him sign them '

Yes Mr Rearden "

"I don t like to deal with Jim He d waste two hours trying to make himself believe that he s made me believe that he s doing me a favor by accepting

Eddie sat without moving looking down at his plate

"What s the matter?

Mr Rearden I d like to say thank you . but there isn t any form of it big enough to—

"Look Eddie You ve got the makings of a good businessman so you d better get a few things straight There aren t any thank you s in situations of this kind I m not doing it for Taggart Transcontinental It s a simple practical selfish matter on my part Why should I collect my money from you now, when it might prove to be the death blow to your company? If your company were no good I d collect and fast I don t engage in charity and I don't gamble on incompetents But you re still the best railroad in the country When the John Galt Line is completed you'll be the soundest one financially So I have good reason to wait. Besides you re in trouble on account of my rail I intend to see you win"

"I still owe you thanks Mr Rearden for something much greater than charity "

"No Don t you see? I have just received a great deal of money

ever

again

for m

He

horrid about it!

"What "

"What they ve done to you—and what you re doing in return mean—" He stopped "Forgive me Mr Rearden I know this is no way to talk business "

earden smiled "Thanks, Eddie I know what you mean. But et it. To hell with them"

Yes. Only Mr Rearden, may I say something to you? I w it's completely improper and I'm not speaking as a vice-ident."

Go ahead."

I don't have to tell you what your offer means to Dagny, to , to every decent person on Taggart Transcontinental You know And you know you can count on us But . . but I think it s hor-le that Jim Taggart should benefit, too—that you should be the : to save him and people like him, after they—"

Rearden laughed "Eddie, what do we care about people like him? 're driving an express, and they re riding on the roof, making a of noise about being leaders Why should we care? We have ough power to carry them along—haven't we?"

• •

"It won't stand."

The summer sun made blotches of fire on the windows of the y and glittering sparks in the dust of the streets Columns of at shimmered through the air, rising from the roofs to the white ge of the calendar The calendar's motor ran on, marking off the t days of June.

"It won t stand," people said "When they run the first train on e John Galt Line, the rail will split. They'll never get to the idge. If they do, the bridge will collapse under the engine"

From the slopes of Colorado, freight trains rolled down the ack of the Phoe... [illegible] 1 the main [illegible] co and the [illegible] went radi- [illegible] idustries in mall states No one spoke about them To the knowledge of the ublic, the tank trains moved as silently as rays and as rays, they ere noticed only when they became the light of electric lamps, he heat of furnaces, the movement of motors but as such, they ere not noticed, they were taken for granted.

The Phoenix Durango Railroad was to end operations on July 25

"Hank Rearden is a greedy monster," people said "Look at the ortune he s made. Has he ever given anything in return? Has he ver shown any sign of social conscience? Money that's all he's fter He'll do anything for money What does he care if people ose their lives when his bridge collapses?"

"The Taggarts have been a band of vultures for generations," people said "It s in their blood. Just remember that the founder of that family was Nat Taggart, the most notoriously anti-social scoundrel that ever lived, who bled the country white to squeeze a fortune for himself You can be sure that a Taggart won't hesitate to risk people s lives in order to make a profit They bought inferior rail because it's cheaper than steel—what do they care catastrophes and mangled human bodies, after they ve fares?"

People said it because other people said it. They did

why it was being said and heard everywhere They did not giv
or ask for reasons "Reason," Dr. Pritchett had told them, "is th
most naïve of all superstitions."

"The source of public opinion?" said Claude Slagenhop in
radio speech "There is no source of public opinion It is spon
taneously general It is a reflex of the collective instinct of the co
lective mind"

Orren Boyle gave an interview to *Globe*, the news magazi
with the largest circulation The interview was devoted to t
subject of the grave social responsibility of metallurgists, stressi
the fact that metal performed so many crucial tasks where hum
lives depended on its quality "One should not, it seems to m
use human beings as guinea pigs in the launching of a new pro
uct," he said He mentioned no names

"Why, no I don't say that that bridge will collapse," said
chief metallurgist of Associated Steel, on a television progra
'I don't say it at all I just say that if I had any children, I would
let them ride on the first train that's going to cross that brid
But it's only a personal preference, nothing more, just beca
I'm overly fond of children"

"I don't claim that the Rearden-Taggart contraption will
lapse,' wrote Bertram Scudder in *The Future* "Maybe it will
maybe it wont Thats not the important issue The import
issue is what protection does society have against the arroga
selfishness and greed of two unbridled individualists, whose rec
are conspicuously devoid of any public spirited actions? These
apparently, are willing to stake the lives of their fellow men
their own conceited notions about their powers of judgm
against the overwhelming majority opinion of recognized exp
Should society permit it? If that thing does collapse, won't i
too late to take precautionary measures? Won't it be like loc
the barn after the horse ... s been the t
... be kept br
...
... erested Citiz
... ar's study of
... n Galt Line by government experts before the first train wer
lowed to run The petition stated that its signers had no motive
than "...
Eubank ...
space ...
receive ...
disinterested

No space was given by the newspapers to the progress of the
...
... to write about facts"

A few businessmen thought that one should think about the
sibility that there might be commercial value in Rearden M

ey undertook a survey of the question They did not hire etallurgists to examine samples nor engineers to visit the site of nstruction. They took a public poll Ten thousand people aranteed to represent every existing kind of brain, were asked e question "Would you ride on the John Galt Line?" The answer, erwhelmingly, was "No sir ree!"

No voices were heard in public in defense of Rearden Metal And body attached significance to the fact that the stock of Taggart ranscontinental was rising on the market very slowly almost rtively There were men who watched and played safe Mr lowen bought Taggart stock in the name of his sister Ben Nealy ought it in the name of a cousin Paul Larkin bought it under n alias. "I don't believe in raising controversial issues" said one f these men.

"Oh, yes, of course the construction is moving on schedule" said ames Taggart, shrugging, to his Board of Directors "Oh yes you may feel full confidence My dear sister does not happen to be a uman being, but just an internal combustion engine so one must ot wonder at her success"

When James Taggart heard a rumor that some bridge girders had pht and crashed killing three workmen he leaped to his feet and an to his secretary s office ordering him to call Colorado He tared, pressed against the secretary s desk, as if seeking protection his eyes had the unfocused look of panic. Yet his mouth moved dently into almost a smile and he said, "I'd give anything to see enry Rearden s face right now" When he heard that the rumor as false, he said, "Thank God!" But his voice had a note of sappointment.

"Oh well!" said Philip Rearden to his friends hearing the same mor "Maybe he can fail too once in a while Maybe my great other isn t as great as he thinks"

"Darling," said Lillian Rearden to her husband "I fought for you esterday at a tea where the women were saying that Dagny Taggart is your mistress Oh for heaven s sake don t look at me like that! I know it s preposterous and I gave them hell for t. It's just that those silly bitches can't imagine any other reason why a woman would take such a stand against everybody for the sake of your Metal Of course, I know better than that. I know that the Taggart woman is perfectly sexless and doesn t give a damn about you—and, darling I know that if you ever had the courage for anything of the sort, which you haven't you wouldn't p for an adding machine in tailored suits you d go for some lond, feminine chorus girl who—oh, but Henry I'm only joking! —don't look at me like that!"

"Dagny" James Taggart said miserably "what s going to happen to us? Taggart Transcontinental has become so unpopular!"

Dagny laughed in enjoyment of the moment any moment as if the undercurrent of enjoyment was constant within her and little was needed to tap it She laughed easily her mouth relaxed and open. Her teeth were very white against her sun scorched face. Her eyes had the look, acquired in open country, of being set for

great distances On her last few visits to New York, he had noticed that she looked at him as if she did not see him

"What are we going to do? The public is so overwhelmingly against us!"

"Jim, do you remember the story they tell about Nat Taggart? He said that he envied only one of his competitors, the one who said 'The public be damned!' He wished he had said it"

In the summer days and in the heavy stillness of the evenings of the city, there were moments when a lonely man or woman—on a park bench, on a street corner, at an open window—would see in a newspaper a brief mention of the progress of the John Galt Line and would look at the city with a sudden stab of hope They were the very young, who felt that it was the kind of event they longed to see happening in the world—or the very old, who had seen a world in which such events did happen They did not care about railroads, they knew nothing about business, they knew only that someone was fighting against great odds and winning. They did not admire the fighters' purpose, they believed the voices of public opinion—and yet, when they read that the Line was growing, they felt a moment's sparkle and wondered why it made their own problems seem easier

S lentl —l ard of Ta
gar John Ga
Lin rs for ca
were piling up—for the first train to run on the John Galt Line Dagny Taggart had announced that the first train would be, not a passenger express loaded with celebrities and politicians, as was the custom, but a freight special.

The freight came from farms, from lumber yards, from mines all over the country, from distant places whose last means of survival were the new factories of Colorado. No one wrote about these shippers, because they were men who were not disinterested

The Phoen x D

run that train

Dagny sat at her battered desk, against the blotched wall of her office. She said, without moving, "Get out of here."

It was a sentence the man had never heard in the polished offices of railroad executives He looked bewildered. "I came to tell you—"

"If you have anything to say to me, start over again."

"What?"

"Don't tell me what you're going to allow me to do"

"Well, I meant we're not going to allow our men to run your train"

"That's different."

"Well, that's what we've decided."

"Who's decided it?"

"The committee What you're doing is a violation of hum

. You can't force men to go out to get killed—when that e collapses—just to make money for you."

e searched for a sheet of blank paper and handed it to him. it down in writing" she said, "and we'll sign a contract to effect."

What contract?"

That no member of your union will ever be employed to run ngine on the John Galt Line"

Why ... wait a minute ... I haven't said—"

You don't want to sign such a contract?"

No I—"

Why not, since you know that the bridge is going to collapse?"

I only want—"

I know what you want. You want a stranglehold on your men means of the jobs which *I* give them—and on me, by means of r men. You want me to provide the jobs, and you want to ke it impossible for me to have any jobs to provide Now I'll e you a choice That train is going to be run. You have no ... to be run ... them, the ... Then, if ... existence, ... union will ... hat I need ur men more than they need me, choose accordingly If you ow *that* I can run an engine, but they can't build a railroad, oose according to that. Now are you going to forbid your en to run that train?"

"I didn't say we'd forbid it. I haven't said anything about rbidding. But ... but you can't force men to risk their lives n something nobody's ever tried before"

"I'm not going to force anyone to take that run."

"What are ...

... o ahead. Advise them anything you wish. Tell them whatever you like But leave the choice to them Don't try to forbid it."

The notice that appeared in every roundhouse of the Taggart ystem was signed "Edwin Willers, Vice-President in Charge of peration." It asked engineers, who were willing to drive the first ain on the John Galt Line, so to inform the office of Mr Willers, ot later than eleven A.M. of July 15

It was a quarter of eleven, on the morning of the fifteenth when e telephone rang in her office It was Eddie, calling from high p in the Taggart Building outside her window "Dagny, I think u'd better come over" His voice sounded queer

She hurried across the street, then down the marble-floored alls, to the door that still carried the name "Dagny Taggart" on s glass panel. She pulled the door open.

The ante-room of the office was full Men stood jammed among the desks against the walls As she entered they took their h off in sudden silence She saw the graying heads the muscular shoulders she saw the smiling faces of her staff at their desks and the face of Eddie Willers at the end of the room Everybody knew that nothing had to be said

Eddie stood by the open door of her office The crowd parted to let her approach him He moved his hand, pointing at the room then at a pile of letters and telegrams

Dagny every one of them he said Every engineer on Taggart Transcontinental Those who could came here some from as fa as the Chicago Division He pointed at the mail 'There's the re of them To be exact there's only three I haven't heard from one's on a vacation in the north woods one's in a hospital an one's in jail for reckless driving—of his automobile

She looked at the men She saw the suppressed grins on th solemn faces She inclined her head in acknowledgment She stoo for a moment head bowed as if she were accepting a verd knowing that the verdict applied to her, to every man in the roo and to the world beyond the walls of the building

Thank you she said

Most of the men had seen her many times Looking at her she raised her head many of them thought—in astonishment a for the first time—that the face of their Operating Vice Preside was the face of a woman and that it was beautiful

Someone in the back of the crowd cried suddenly, cheerfull "To hell with Jim Taggart!"

An explosion answered him The men laughed they cheered th broke into applause The response was out of all proportion to t sentence But the sentence had given them the excuse they neede They seemed to be applauding the speaker in insolent defiance authority But everyone in the room knew who it was that they we cheering

She raised her hand We're too early ' she said laughing "W till a week from today That's when we ought to celebrate A believe me we will!"

They drew lots for the run She picked a folded slip of pa from among a pile containing all their names The winner was in the room but he was one of the best men on the system Logan engineer of the Taggart Comet on the Nebraska Divis

"Wire Pat and tell h m he's [illegible] she s to E [illegible]
but [illegible]
him [illegible]
A [illegible] grinned and said, I thought would Miss Taggart."

* *

Rearden was in New York on the day when Dagny telepho him from her office "Hank I'm going to have a press confere tomorrow"

He laughed aloud. "No!"

s." Her voice sounded earnest, but, dangerously, a bit too t. "The newspapers have suddenly discovered me and are questions I'm going to answer them"
ve a good time"
ill Are you going to be in town tomorrow? I'd like to have 1 on it."
ay I wouldn't want to miss it."
office of
rained to
world the
audience
ome public figure who made utterances about the public in phrases carefully chosen to convey no meaning It was daily job to sling words together in any combination they ed, so long as the words did not fall into a sequence saying thing specific They could not understand the interview now

ully tailored, suggesting an air of formal almost military nce. She sat straight, and her manner was severely dignified,

broken
s body
ng against the other His manner was pleasantly informal, a bit too informal
n the clear monotonous voice of a military report consulting papers looking straight at the men Dagny recited the tech
giving exact figures on
bridge the method of
tone of a banker, she
le and named the large
she said
'All said one of the reporters. "Aren't you going to give us a ssage for the public?"
"That was my message."
"But hell—I mean aren't you going to defend yourself?"
"Against what?"
"Don't you want to tell us something to justify your Line?"
"I have."
A man with a mouth shaped as a permanent sneer asked "Well, hat I want to know as Bertram Scudder stated is what protec- on do we have against your Line being no good?"
"Don't ride on it."
Another asked "Aren't you going to tell us your motive for uilding that Line?"
"I have told you the profit which I expect to make"
"Oh, Miss Taggart, don't say that!" cried a young boy He was ew he was still honest about his job and he felt that he liked Dagny Taggart, without knowing why "That's the wrong thing to ay That's what they're all saying about you."

Are they?

I'm sure you didn't mean it the way it sounds and and

I'm sure you'll want to clarify it

Why yes if you wish me to The average profit of railroads has been two per cent of the capital invested An industry that does so much and keeps so little should consider itself immoral As I have explained the cost of the John Galt Line in relation to the traffic which it will carry makes me expect a profit of not less than fifteen per cent on our investment Of course any industrial profit above four per cent is considered usury nowadays I shall nevertheless do my best to make the John Galt Line earn a profit of twenty per cent for me if possible That was my motive for building the Line Have I made myself clear now?

The boy was looking at her helplessly You don't mean to earn a profit for *you* Miss Taggart? You mean for the small stockholders of course? he prompted hopefully

Why no I happen to be one of the largest stockholders of Taggart Transcontinental so my share of the profits will be one of the largest Now Mr Rearden is in a much more fortuna position because he has no stockholders to share with—or would you rather make your own statement Mr Rearden?"

"Yes gladly said Rearden Inasmuch as the formula of Rear den Metal is my own personal secret, and in view of the fa that the Metal costs much less to produce than you boys can im agine I expect to skin the public to the tune of a profit of twenty five per cent in the next few years

"What do you mean skin the public Mr Rearden? asked th boy "If it's true as I've read in your ads that your Metal will la three times longer than any other and at half the price wouldn the public be getting a bargain?

"Oh have you noticed that? said Rearden

"Do the two of you realize you're talking for publication?" aske the man with the sneer

"But Mr Hopkins" said Dagny in polite astonishment " there any reason why we would talk to you if it weren't for pu lication?"

Do you want us to quote all the things you said?"

"I hope I may trust you to be sure and quote them Would yo oblige me by taking this down verbatim? She paused to see the pencils ready then dictated "Miss Taggart says—quote—I expe to make a pile of money on the John Galt Line I will have earned Close quote Thank you so much"

"A

alt Line

sa of Ta

gart Transcontinental in Cheyenne Wyoming at four P M on Ju twenty second It *will* be a freight special consisting of eigh cars It will be driven by an eight thousand horsepower four un Diesel locomotive—which I'm leasing from Taggart Transco tinental for the occasion It will run non-stop to Wyatt Junctio

lorado traveling at an average speed of one hundred miles per ur I beg your pardon?" she asked, hearing the long low sound a whistle.

"What did you say, Miss Taggart?"

"I said, one hundred miles per hour—grades curves and all"

"But shouldn't you cut the speed below normal rather than .

ss Taggart, don't you have any consideration whatever for pub- opinion?"

"D . . . . . .

x" . .

neers volunteered to do it So did the firemen the brakemen and e conductors. We had to draw lots for every job on the train's rew The engineer will be Pat Logan of the Taggart Comet, the reman—Ray McKim. I shall ride in the cab of the engine with hem."

"Not really!"

"Please do attend the opening It's on July twenty-second The ress is most eagerly invited Contrary to my usual policy, I have ecome a publicity hound Really I should like to have spotlights, adio microphones and television cameras I suggest that you plant a few cameras around the bridge The collapse of the bridge would give you some interesting shots"

"Miss Taggart," asked Rearden "why didn't you mention that I'm going to ride in that engine too?"

She looked at him across the room and for a moment they were alone, holding each other's glance

"Yes, of course Mr Rearden" she answered

* *

She did not see him again until they looked at each other across e platform of the Taggart station in Cheyenne on July 22

She did not look for anyone when she stepped out on the plat rm she felt as if her senses had merged so that she could ot distinguish the sky, the sun or the sounds of an enormous owd but . . .

Yet he .

ow long .

f the Joh

onscious .

ke an expert mechanic, but he was stared at by the faces around m, because he was Hank Rearden of Rearden Steel High above m, she saw the letters TT on the silver front of the engine The nes of the engine slanted back aimed at space

There was distance and a crowd between them but his eyes oved to her the moment she came out They looked at each other nd she knew that he felt as she did This was not to be a solemn enture upon which their future depended but simply their day of njoyment. The r work was done For the moment there was no f re They had earned the present.

Only if one feels immensely important, she had told him can

one feel truly light Whatever the trains run would mean to others for the two of them their own persons were this day's sole meaning Whatever it was that others sought in life their right to what they now felt was all the two of them wished to find. It was as if across the platform they said it to each other

Then she turned away from him

She noticed that she too was being stared at that there were people around her that she was laughing and answering questions

She had not expected such a large crowd They filled the platform the tracks the square beyond the station they were on the roofs of the boxcars on the sidings at the windows of every house in sight Something had drawn them here something in the air which at the last moment, had made James Taggart want to attend the opening of the John Galt Line She had forbidden it "If you come Jim she had said I ll have you thrown out of your own Taggart station This is one event you re not going to see." Then she had chosen Eddie Willers to represent Taggart Transcontinental at the opening

She looked at the crowd and she felt simultaneously astonishment that they should stare at her when this event was so personally her own that no communication about it was possible and a sense of fitness that they should be here that they should want to see it because the sight of an achievement was the greatest gift a human being could offer to others

She felt no anger toward anyone on earth The things she had endured had now receded into some outer fog like pain that still ex sts b t has n [illegible] uld not stand in the [illegible] this day was as bril [illegible] on the silver of the [illegible] could doubt it and she had no one to hate.

Eddie Willers was watching her He stood on the platform surrounded by Taggart executives division heads civic leaders and the various local officials who had been outargued bribed or threatened to obtain permits to run a train through town zones at a hundred miles an hour For once for this day and event his title of Vice President was real to him and he carried it well But while he spoke to those around him his eyes kept following Dagny through the crowd She was dressed in blue slacks and shirt she was unconscious of official duties she had left them to him the train was now her sole concern, as if she were only a member of its crew

She saw him she approached and she shook his hand her smile was l ke a summation of all the things they did not have to say "Well Eddie you re Taggart Transcontinental now"

"Yes" he said solemnly his vo ce low

There were reporters asking questions and they dragged her away from him They were asking him questions too "Mr Willers what is the policy of Taggart Transcontinental in regard to this line?" "So Taggart Transcontinental is just a disinterested observer is it, Mr Willers?" He answered as best he could He was looking a

un on a Diesel engine But what he was seeing was the sun
i clearing of the woods and a twelve year-old girl telling
that he would help her run the railroad some day

e watched from a distance while the train's crew was lined up
ront of the engine, to face a firing squad of cameras Dagny
Rearden were smiling as if posing for snapshots of a summer
ition. Pat Logan the engineer, a short, sinewy man with gray-
hair and a contemptuously inscrutable face, posed in a manner
amused indifference Ray McKim the fireman, a husky young
n, grinned with an air of embarrassment and superiority to-
er The rest of the crew looked as if they were about to wink
the cameras A photographer said, laughing, "Can't you people
k doomed please? I know that's what the editor wants"

Dagny and Rearden were answering questions for the press
ere was no mockery in their answers now, no bitterness They
re enjoying it They spoke as if the questions were asked in
od faith. Irresistibly, at some point which no one noticed, this
came true

"What do you expect to happen on this run?" a reporter asked
e of the brakemen. "Do you think you'll get there?"

"I think we'll get there," said the brakeman, "and so do
u, brother"

"Mr Logan, do you have any children? Did you take out any
tra insurance? I'm just thinking of the bridge you know"

"Don't cross that bridge till I come to it," Pat Logan an-
wered contemptuously

"Mr Rearden, how do you know that your rail will hold?"

"The man who taught people to make a printing press" said
Rearden, "how did *he* know it?"

"Tell me, Miss Taggart, what's going to support a seven-thousand-
ton train on a three thousand ton bridge?"

"My judgment," she answered

The men of the press who despised their own profession, did
not know why they were enjoying it today One of them, a young
man with years of notorious success behind him and a cynical
look of twice his age, said suddenly, "I know what I'd like to be
I wish I could be a man who covers *news*!"

The hands of the clock on the station building stood at 3 45
The crew started off toward the caboose at the distant end of the
train. The movement and noise of the crowd were subsiding With
out conscious intention, people were beginning to stand still

The dispatcher had received word from every local operator
along the line of rail that wound through the mountains to the
Wyatt oil fields three hundred miles away He came out of the
station building and, looking at Dagny, gave the signal for clear
track ahead. Standing by the engine Dagny raised her hand, re-
peating his gesture in sign of an order received and understood.

The long line of boxcars stretched off into the distance in
spaced, rectangular links, like a spinal cord. When the con-
ductor's arm swept through the air, far at the end she moved
her arm in answering signal

Rearden Logan and McKim stood silently, as if at attention, letting her be first to get aboard As she started up the rungs on the side of the engine a reporter thought of a question he had not asked

"Miss Taggart" he called after her, "who is John Galt?"

She turned hanging onto a metal bar with one hand suspended for an instant above the heads of the crowd

"*We* are!" she answered

Logan followed her into the cab then McKim Rearden went last then the door of the engine was shut with the tight finality of sealed metal

The lights hanging on a signal bridge against the sky were green There were green lights between the tracks low over the ground dropping off into the distance where the rails turned and a green light stood at the curve against leaves of a summer green that looked as if they too were lights

Two men held a white silk ribbon stretched across the track in front of the engine They were the superintendent of the Colorado Division and Nealy's chief engineer who had remained on the job Eddie Willers was to cut the ribbon they held and thus to open the new line

The photographers posed him carefully scissors in hand his back to the engine He would repeat the ceremony two or three times they explained to give them a choice of shots they had a fresh bol of ribb

to comply, then stopped

be a phony"

of a vice president b

o back—way back Tak

one shot when I cut it then get out of the way fast"

They obeyed, moving hastily farther down the track There was only one minute left Eddie turned his back to the cameras and stood between the rails facing the engine He held the scissors ready over the white ribbon He took his hat off and tossed it aside He was looking up at the engine A faint wind stirred his blond hair The engine was a great silver shield bearing the emblem of Nat Taggart

Eddie Willers raised his hand as the hand of the station clock reached the instant of four

"Open her up Pat!" he called

In the moment when the engine started forward he cut the white ribbon and leaped out of the way

From the side track he saw the window of the cab go by and Dagny waving to him in an answering salute Then the engine was gone and he stood looking across at the crowded platform that kept appearing and vanishing as the freight cars clicked past him

* *

The green blue rails ran to meet them like two jets shot out of a single point beyond the curve of the earth The crossties melted, as they approached into a smooth stream rolling down under the wheels A blurred streak clung to the side of the engine low over the ground Trees and telegraph poles sprang into sight abruptly

went by as if jerked back The green plains stretched past, in a
rely flow At the edge of the sky, a long wave of mountains
rsed the movement and seemed to follow the train

ie felt no wheels under the floor The motion was a smooth
t on a sustained impulse, as if the engine hung above the rails,
g a current. She felt no speed. It seemed strange that the green
s of the signals kept coming at them and past, every few sec-
s She knew that the signal lights were spaced two miles apart.
he needle on the speedometer in front of Pat Logan stood at
hundred.

he sat in the fireman's chair and glanced across at Logan once
while He sat slumped forward a little, relaxed, one hand rest-
lightly on the throttle as if by chance, but his eyes were
d on the track ahead He had the ease of an expert, so con-
nt that it seemed casual, but it was the ease of a tremendous
centration, the concentration on one's task that has the ruthless-
s of an absolute Ray McKim sat on a bench behind them Rear-
n stood in the middle of the cab

He stood hands in pockets feet apart, braced against the mo-
n, looking ahead. There was nothing he could now care to see
the side of the track he was looking at the rail

Ownership—she thought, glancing back at him—weren't there
ose who knew nothing of its nature and doubted its reality? No,
was not made of papers, seals, grants and permissions There
was—in his eyes

The sound filling the cab seemed part of the space they were
ossing It held the low drone of the motors—the sharper clicking
f the many parts that rang in varied cries of metal—and the
gh thin chimes of trembling glass panes

Things streaked past—a water tank, a tree, a shanty, a grain silo
They had a windshield wiper motion they were rising, describing
curve and dropping back The telegraph wires ran a race with
he train, rising and falling from pole to pole in an even rhythm,
like the cardiograph record of a steady heartbeat written across
the sky

She looked ahead, at the haze that melted rail and distance a haze
that cou[illegible]
worder[illegible]
the eng[illegible]
se he [illegible] and the glass shield would be first to smash against
it. She smiled grasping the answer it was the security of being
first, with full sight and full knowledge of one's course—not the
blind sense of being pulled into the unknown by some unknown
power ahead It was the greatest sensation of existence not to
trust, but to know

The glass sheets of the cab's windows made the spread of
fields seem vaster the earth looked as open to movement as it
was to sight. Yet nothing was distant and nothing was out of reach
had barely grasped the sparkle of a lake ahead—and in
start she was beside it, then past.

It was a strange foreshortening between sight

thought between wish and fulf
sharply in her mind after a sta
First the vision—then the phy
thought—then the purposeful motion down the straight line ... single track to a chosen goal Could one have any meaning with out the other? Wasn t it evil to wish without moving—or to move without aim? Whose malevolence was it that crept through the world struggling to break the two apart and set them against each other?

She shook her head She did not want to think or to wonder why the world behind her was as it was She did not care She was flying away from it at the rate of a hundred miles an hour She leaned to the open window by her side and felt the wind of the speed blowing her hair off her forehead She lay back conscious of nothing but the pleasure it gave her

Yet her mind kept racing Broken bits of thought flew past her attention like the telegraph poles by the track Physical pleasure —she thought This is a train made of steel running on rail of Rearden Metal moved by the energy of burning oil and electric generators it s a physical sensation of physical movement through space but is that the cause and the meaning of what I now feel? Do they call it a low animal joy—this feeling that I would not care if the rail did break to bits under us now—it won t—but I wouldn t care because I have experienced this? A low physical material degrading pleasure of the body

She smiled her eyes closed the wind streaming through her hair

She opened her eyes and saw that Rearden stood looking down at her It was the same glance with which he had looked at the rail She felt her power of volition knocked out by some single, dull blow that made her unable to move She held his eyes, lying back in her chair the wind pressing the thin cloth of her shirt to her body

He looked away and she turned again to the sight of the earth tearing open before them

She did not want to think but the sound of thought went on like the drone of the motors under the sounds of the engine She looked at the cab around her The fine steel mesh of the ceiling she thought, and the row of rivets in the corner hold ng sheets of steel sealed together—who made them? The brute force of men s muscles? Who made it poss ble for four dials and three levers in front of Pat Logan to hold the incredible power of the sixteen motors behind them and deliver it to the effortless control of one man s hand?

These things and the capacity from which they came—was this the pursuit men regarded as evil? Was this what they called an ignoble concern with the physical world? Was this the state of being enslaved by matter? Was this the surrender of man s spirit to his body?

She shook her head as if she wished she could toss the subject out of the window and let it get shattered somewhere along the

t. She looked at the sun on the summer fields She did not : to think because these questions were only details of a truth knew and had always known Let them go past like the tele-ph poles The thing she knew was like the wires flying above n unbroken line The words for it and for this journey and for feel ng and for the whole of man s earth were It s so simple so right!

he looked out at the country She had been aware for some : of the human figures that flashed with an odd regularity at s de of the track. But they went by so fast that she could not p their meaning until like the squares of a movie film brief les blended into a whole and she understood it. She had had the k guarded since its completion but she had not hired the an chain she saw strung out along the right-of way A solitary re stood at every mile post Some were young schoolboys, others : so old that the silhouettes of their bodies looked bent against sky All of them were armed with anything they had found, n costly rifles to ancient muskets All of them wore railroad s. They were the sons of Taggart employees, and old railroad : who had retired after a full lifetime of Taggart service They come unsummoned to guard this train. As the engine went him every man in his turn stood erect, at attention, and raised gun in a military salute

When she grasped it, she burst out laughing suddenly with the uptness of a cry She laughed shaking like a child it sounded sobs of deliverance Pat Logan nodded to her with a faint le he had noted the guard of honor long ago She leaned to open window and her arm swept in wide curves of triumph, ing to the men by the track

On the crest of a distant hill she saw a crowd of people their as swinging against the sky The gray houses of a village were tered through a valley below as if dropped there once and otten the roof lines slanted sagging and the years had washed ay the color of the walls Perhaps generations had lived there h noth ng to mark the passage of their days but the movement the sun from east to west. Now these men had climbed the hill see a s lver headed comet cut through their plains like the nd of a bugle through a long weight of silence

As houses began to come more frequently closer to the track saw people at the windows on the porches on distant roofs. : saw crowds blocking the roads at grade crossings The roads et sweeping past like the spokes of a fan and she could not ingu sh human figures only their arms greeting the train like nches waving in the wind of its speed They stood under the nging red l ghts of warning signals, under the signs saying op Look. Listen."

The station past which they flew as they went through a town a hundred miles an hour was a swaying sculpture of people m platform to roof She caught the flicker of waving arms of s tossed in the air of something flung against the side of the ne, which was a bunch of flowers.

As the miles clicked past them, the towns went by, with the stations at which they did not stop, with the crowds of people who had come only to see, to cheer and to hope. She saw garlands of flowers under the sooted eaves of old station buildings, and bunting of red-white-and-blue on the time-eaten walls. It was like the pictures she had seen—and envied—in schoolbook histories of railroads from the era when people gathered to greet the first run of a train. It was like the age when Nat Taggart moved across the country and the stops along his way were marked by men eager for the sight of achievement. That age, she had thought, was gone, generations had passed, with no event to greet anywhere, with nothing to see but the cracks lengthening year by year on the walls built by Nat Taggart. Yet men came again, as they had come in his time, drawn by the same response.

She glanced at Rearden. He stood against the wall, unaware of the crowds, indifferent to admiration. He was watching the performance of track and train with an expert's intensity of professional interest; his bearing suggested that he would kick aside, as irrelevant, any thought such as "They like it," when the thought ringing in his mind was "It works!"

His tall figure in the single gray of slacks and shirt looked as if his body were stripped for action. The slacks stressed the long lines of his legs, the light, firm posture of standing without effort or being ready to swing forward at an instant's notice; the short sleeves stressed the gaunt strength of his arms; the open shirt bared the tight skin of his chest.

She turned away, realizing suddenly that she had been glancing back at him too often. But this day had no ties to past or future—her thoughts were cut off from implications—she saw no further meaning, only the immediate intensity of the feeling that she was imprisoned with him, sealed together in the same cube of air, the closeness of his presence underscoring her awareness of this day as his rails underscored the flight of the train.

She turned deliberately and glanced back. He was looking at her. He did not turn away, but held her glance, coldly and with full intention. She smiled defiantly, not letting herself know the full meaning of her smile, knowing only that it was the sharpest blow she could strike at his inflexible face. She felt a sudden desire to see him trembling, to tear a cry out of him. She turned her head away slowly, feeling a reckless amusement, wondering why she found it difficult to breathe.

She sat leaning back in her chair, looking ahead, knowing that he was as aware of her as she was of him. She found pleasure in the special self-consciousness it gave her. When she crossed her legs, when she leaned on her arm against the window sill, when she brushed her hair off her forehead—every movement of her body was underscored by a feeling the unadmitted words for which were: Is he seeing it?

The towns had been left behind. The track was rising through a country growing more grimly reluctant to permit approach. The rails kept vanishing behind curves, and the ridges of hills

ing closer as if the plains were being folded into pleats The stone shelves of Colorado were advancing to the edge of the k—and the distant reaches of the sky were shrinking into waves plush mountains

ar ahead they saw a mist of smoke over factory chimneys—the web of a power station and the lone needle of a steel cture They were approaching Denver

he glanced at Pat Logan He was leaning forward a little her she saw a slight tightening in the fingers of his hand and his eyes He knew, as she did, the danger of crossing a city at speed they were traveling [illegible]

[illegible]

n of sound the beating of wheels against the glass panes of a ult, and the screams of cheering from a mass that swayed like liquid in the darkness among steel columns—they flew toward glowing arch and the green lights hanging in the open sky beyond, green lights that were like the doorknobs of space, throwing door after door open before them. Then, vanishing behind them, ent the streets clotted with traffic the open windows bulging th human figures, the screaming sirens and—from the top of distant skyscraper—a cloud of paper snowflakes shimmering on e air, flung by someone who saw the passage of a silver bullet ross a city stopped still to watch it.

Then they were out again, on a rocky grade—and with shocking uddenness the [illegible] had [illegible] aught [illegible] with [illegible] wisted [illegible] m to [illegible]

[illegible] curves of rail became coiling circles among walls that ad [illegible] to grind them off their sides But the track cut through at [illegible] and the mountains parted flaring open like two wings at the [illegible] of the rail—one [illegible] green, made of vertical needles, with whole [illegible] serving as the pile of a wild carpet—the other reddish-brown, [illegible] of naked rock

She looked down through the open window and saw the silver [illegible] of the engine hanging over empty space Far below, the thin [illegible] of a stream were falling from ledge to ledge and the ferns [illegible] drooped to the water were the [illegible] tips of [illegible] [illegible] saw the engine's [illegible] [illegible] along the [illegible] drop—and [illegible] below, she saw [illegible] green-blue [illegible]

A wall of rock shot upward in their path filling the windsh eld, darkening the cab so close that it seemed as if the remnant of time could not let them escape it But she heard the screech of wheels on curve the light came bursting back—and she saw an open stretch of rail on a narrow shelf The shelf ended in space. The nose of the engine was aimed straight at the sky There was nothing to stop them but two strips of green blue metal strung in a curv along the shelf

To take the pounding violence of sixteen motors she thought, the thrust of seven thousand tons of steel and freight, to withstand it grip it and swing it around a curve was the impossible feat performed by two strips of metal no wider than her arm. What made it possible? What power had given to an unseen arrangement of molecules the power on which their lives depended and the lives of all the men who waited for the eighty boxcars? She saw a man s face and hands in the glow of a laboratory oven over the white liquid of a sample of metal

She felt the sweep of an emotion which she could not contain as of something bursting upward She turned to the door of the motor units she threw it open to a screaming jet of sound and escaped into the pounding of the engine s heart.

For a moment it was as if she were reduced to a single sense the sense of hearing and what remained of her hearing was only a long rising falling rising scream She stood in a swaying sealed chamber of metal looking at the giant generators She had wanted to see them because the sense of triumph within her was bound to them to her love for them to the reason of the life work she had chosen In the abnormal clarity of a violent emotion, she fel as if she were about to grasp something she had never known and had to know She laughed aloud but heard no sound of it nothing could be heard through the continuous explosion "The John Gal Line!" she shouted for the amusement of feeling her voice swep away from her lips

She moved slowly along the length of the motor units, down narrow passage between the engines and the wall She felt the im modesty of an intruder as if she had slipped inside a living creatur under its silver skin and were watch ng its life beating in gra metal cylinders in twisted coils in sealed tubes in the convulsiv whirl of blades in wire cages The enormous complexity of th shape above her was drained by invisible channels and the violenc raging within it was led to fragile needles on glass dials to gree and red beads winking on panels to tall thin cabinets stencile High Voltage

Why had she always felt that joyous sense of confidence whe looking at machines?—she thought In these g ant shapes tw aspects pertaining to the inhuman were radiantly absent the caus less and the purposeless Every part of the motors was an em bodied answer to "Why?" and "What for? —like the steps of life-course chosen by the sort of mind she worshipped The moto were a moral code cast in steel

They *are* alive she thought because they are the physical shap

control Their soul is in every man who has the capacity al this achievement Should the soul vanish from the earth,

shivering
ught and

that she
d to laugh to kneel or to lift her arms wishing she were to release the thing she felt, knowing that it had no form of ssion.

e stopped She saw Rearden standing by the steps of the door e cab He was looking at her as if he knew why she had es d and what she felt. They stood still their bodies becoming a e that met across a narrow passage The beating within her one with the beating of the motors—and she felt as if both e from him, the pounding rhythm wiped out her will They back to the cab, silently, knowing that there had been a nent which was not to be mentioned between them.

he cliffs ahead were a bright, liquid gold Strips of shadow were thening in the valleys below The sun was descending to the s in the west They were going west and up toward the sun

he sky had deepened to the greenish blue of the rails when they smokestack

's new
Wyatt
t roofs
In the
ing the

at that distance a rocket shot out from among the buildings e high above the town and broke as a fountain of gold stars ast the darkening sky Men whom she could not see were ng the streak of the train on the side of the mountain and e sending a salute a lonely plume of fire in the dusk the mbol of celebration or of a call for help

Beyond the next turn in a sudden view of distance she saw two s of electric light, white and red low in the sky They were t airplanes—she saw the cones of metal girders supporting them and in the moment when she knew that they were the derricks f Wyatt Oil she saw that he . . . sweeping downward that e car . . . ng apart—and at e bot . . . e dark crack of canyon

They were flying down, she forgot the careful grading, the
curves of the gradual descent, she felt as if the train were plu
downward, head first, she watched the bridge growing to
them—a small, square tunnel of metal lace work, a few be
criss-crossed through the air, green blue and glowing struck b
long ray of sunset light from some crack in the barrier of moun
There were people by the bridge the dark splash of a crowd,
they rolled off the edge of her consciousness She heard the r
accelerating sound of the wheels—and some theme of m
heard to the rhythm of wheels, kept tugging at her mind, gro
louder—it burst suddenly within the cab, but she knew that it
only in her mind the Fifth Concerto by Richard Halley—
thought did he write it for this? had he known a feeling suc
this?—they were going faster, they had left the ground, she thou
flung off by the mountains as by a springboard, they were
sailing through space—it s not a fair test, she thought, we're
going to touch that bridge—she saw Rearden's face above
she held his eyes and her he
on the air under
heard a drum rol
smearing across
run along the pic,
denly clear, the eep of their downward plunge was car
them up a hill, the derricks of Wyatt Oil were reeling bef
them—Pat Logan turned, glancing up at Rearden with the
of a smile—and Rearden said, "That's that"

The sign on the edge of a roof read Wyatt Junction She sta
feeling that there was something odd about it, until she gras
what it was the sign did not move The sharpest jolt of the jour
was the realization that the engine stood still

She heard voices somewhere, she looked down and saw t
there were people on the platform Then the door of the cab
flung open, she knew that she had to be first to descend and
stepped to the edge For the flash of an instant, she felt the slend
ness of her own body, the lightness of standing full figure in
current of open air She gripped the metal bars and started down
ladder She was halfway down when she felt the palms of a ma
hands slam tight against her ribs and waistline she was torn
the steps, swung through the air and deposited on the ground S
could not believe that the young boy laughing in her face w
Ellis Wyatt The tense, scornful face she remembered now b
the purity, the eagerness, the joyous benevolence of a child in
kind of world for which he had been intended.

She was leaning against his shoulder, feeling unsteady on t
motionless ground, with his arm about her, she was laughing s
was listening to the things he said, she was answering "But did
you know we would?"

In a moment, she saw the faces around them They were t
bondholders of the John Galt Line the men who were Niels
Motors, Hammond Cars Stockton Foundry and all the other
She shook their hands, and there were no speeches, she stood agai

Wyatt, sagging a little, brushing her hair away from her eyes, ng smudges of soot on her forehead She shook the hands of men of the train's crew, without words, with the seal of the : on their faces There were flash bulbs exploding around , and men waving to them from the riggings of the oil wells he slopes of the mountains Above her head, above the heads ie crowd, the letters TT on a silver shield were hit by the ray of a sinking sun

lis Wyatt had taken charge He was leading her somewhere, sweep of his arm cutting a path for them through the crowd, 1 one of the men with the cameras broke through to her side s Taggart," he called, "will you give us a message for the ic?" Ellis Wyatt pointed at the long string of freight cars has"

ıen she was sitting in the back seat of an open car, driving up curves of a mountain road The man beside her was Rearden, lriver was Ellis Wyatt

ıey stopped at a house that stood on the edge of a cliff, with no r habitation anywhere in sight, with the whole of the oil fields ıd on the slopes below

Vhy, of course you're staying at my house overnight, both of " said Ellis Wyatt, as they went in "Where did you expect to ?"

ie laughed "I don't know I hadn't thought of it at all"

The nearest town is an hour's drive away That's where your has gone your boys at the division point are giving a party ıeir honor So is the whole town But I told Ted Nielsen and others that we'd have no banquets for you and no oratory ss you'd like it?"

3od, no!" she said "Thanks, Ellis"

was dark when they sat at the dinner table in a room that had : windows and a few pieces of costly furniture The dinner was ed by a silent figure in a white jacket the only other inhabitant he house, an elderly Indian with a stony face and a courteous ıner A few points of fire were scattered through the room, ııng over and out beyond the windows the candles on the : the lights on the derricks, and the stars

Do you think that you have your hands full now?" Ellis Wyatt saying "Just give me a year and I'll give you something to) you busy Two tank trains a day Dagny? It's going to be or six or as many as you wish me to fill His hand swept over lights on the mountains "This? It's nothing compared to what got coming" He pointed west "The Buena Esperanza Pass : miles from here Everybody's wondering what I'm doing with ɔil shale How many years ago was it that they gave up trying [illegible] too expensive? Well, wait till [illegible] ·apest oil ever to [illegible] it, an untapped [illegible] a mud puddle [illegible] build pipe lu [illegible] don't be'

introduced myself when I spoke to you at the station. I haven't even told you my name"

Rearden grinned "I've guessed it by now"

"I'm sorry I don't like to be careless, but I was too excited"

"What were you excited about?" asked Dagny her eyes narrowed in mockery

Wyatt held her glance for a moment his answer had a tone of solemn intensity strangely conveyed by a smiling voice "About the most beautiful slap in the face I ever got and deserved"

"Do you mean for our first meeting?

"I mean for our first meeting"

"Don't You were right

"I was About everything but you Dagny to find an exception after years of Oh to hell with them! Do you want me to turn on the radio and hear what they're saying about the two of you tonight?"

"No"

Good I don't want to hear them Let them swallow their own speeches They're all climbing on the band wagon now We're the band" He glanced at Rearden What are you smiling at?"

I've always been curious to see what you're like"

"I've never had a chance to be what I'm like—except tonight"

Do you live here alone like this miles away from everything

Wyatt pointed at the window "I'm a couple of steps away from everything"

What about people?"

"I have guest rooms for the kind of people who come to see me on business I want as many miles as possible between myself and all the other kinds He leaned forward to refill their wine glasses "Hank why don't you move to Colorado? To hell with New York and the Eastern Seaboard! This is the capital of the Renaissance The Second Renaissance—not of oil paintings and cathedrals—but of oil derricks power plants and motors made of Rearden Metal They had the Stone Age and the Iron Age and now they're going to call it the Rearden Metal Age—because there's no limit to what your Metal has made possible

"I'm going to buy a few square miles of Pennsylvania," said Rearden. 'The ones around my mills It would have been cheaper to build a branch here as I wanted but you know why I can't and to hell with them! I'll beat them anyway I'm going to expand the mills—and if she can give me three-day freight service to Colorado I'll give you a race for who's going to be the capital of the Renaissance!"

"Give me a year said Dagny "of running trains on the John Galt Line give me time to pull the Taggart system together—and I'll give you three-day freight service across the continent on a Rearden Metal track from ocean to ocean!

"Who was it that said he needed a fulcrum? said Ellis Wyatt "Give me an unobstructed right of way and I'll show them how to move the earth!

e wondered what it was that she liked about the sound of
…tt's laughter Their voices even her own had a tone she had
… the table she was aston
… ly illumination of the
… violent light
… their faces and said
the world as it seems to be right now!
le emptied the glass with a single movement
he heard the crash of the glass against the wall in the same
ant that she saw a circling current—from the curve of his
y to the sweep of his arm to the terrible violence of his hand
flung the glass across the room It was not the conventional
ture meant as celebration it was the gesture of a rebellious
er the vicious gesture which is movement substituted for a
am of pain
"Ellis" she whispered "what's the matter?"
… e same violent suddenness his
… what frightened her was seeing
… "Never mind We'll try to think

The earth below was streaked with moonlight when Wyatt led
em up an outside stairway to the second floor of the house to the
en gallery at the doors of the guest rooms He wished them
od night and they heard his steps descending the stairs The
oonlight seemed to drain sound as it drained color The steps
lled into a distant past and when they died the silence had the
ality of a solitude that had lasted for a long time as if no person
ere left anywhere in reach
She did not turn to the door of her room He did not move At
e level of their feet there was nothing but a thin railing and a
read of space Angular tiers descended below with shadows re
eating the steel tracery of derricks criss-crossing sharp black lines
n patches of glowing rock A few lights white and red trembled
n the clear air, like drops of rain caught on the edges of steel
rders Far in the distance three small drops were green strung
n a line along the Taggart track Beyond them at the end of
pace at the foot of a white curve hung a webbed rectangle which
as the bridge
She felt a rhythm without sound or movement a sense of beating
ension as if the wheels of the John Galt Line were still speeding
n. Slowly in answer and in resistance to an unspoken summons
he turned and looked at him
The look she saw on his face made her know for the first time
that she had known this would be the end of the journey That look
was not as men are taught to represent it it was not a matter of
loose muscles hanging lips and mindless hunger The lines of his
face were pulled tight giving it a peculiar purity a sharp pre-
cision of form making it clean and young His mouth was taut the
lips faintly drawn inward stressing the outline of its shape Only
eyes were blurred their lower lids swollen and raised their gl
ment with that which resembled hatred and pain.

The shock became numbness spreading through her body—she felt a tight pressure in her throat and her stomach—she was con scious of nothing but a silent convulsion that made her unable to breathe But what she felt, without words for it, was Yes, Hank, yes—now—because it is part of the same battle, in some way that I can t name because it is our being, against them our great capacity, for which they torture us, the capacity of happiness Now, like this, without words or questions . . because we want it

It was like an act of hatred, like the cutting blow of a lash en circling her body she felt his arms around her, she felt her leg pulled forward against him and her chest bent back under th pressure of his, his mouth on hers

Her hand moved from his shoulders to his waist to his leg releasing the unconfessed desire of her every meeting with his When she tore her mouth away from him, she was laughing sound lessly, in triumph, as if saying Hank Rearden—the austere, un approachable Hank Rearden of the monklike office, the busine conferences, the harsh bargains—do you remember them now?- I m thinking of it, for the pleasure of knowing that I've broug you to this He was not smiling his face was tight, it was the fa of an enemy, he jerked her head and caught her mouth again, as he were inflicting a wound

She felt him trembling and she thought that this was the ki of cry she had wanted to tear from him—this surrender throu the shreds of his tortured resistance Yet she knew, at the sa time, that the triumph was his, that her laughter was her tribute him that her defiance was submission, that the purpose of all her violent strength was only to make his victory the greater— was holding her body against his, as if stressing his wish to her know that she was now only a tool for the satisfaction his desire—and his victory, she knew, was her wish to let h reduce her to that Whatever I am, she thought, whatever pr of person I may hold, the pride of my courage, of my work, of mind and my freedom—*that* is what I offer you for the pleas of your body, *that* is what I want you to use in your service—a that you want it to serve you is the greatest reward I can have.

There were lights b . . . them He to her wrist and threw . . . her that he needed . . . door, watching her . . . extended her arm to the lamp on the table and turned out light He approached He turned the light on again, with a sin contemptuous jerk of his wrist She saw him smile for the f time, a slow, mocking, sensual smile that stressed the purpose his action

He was holding her half stretched across the bed, he was tear her clothes off, while her face was pressed against him, her mo moving down the line of his neck, down his shoulder She kn that every gesture of her desire for him struck him like a blow, t ere was some shudder of incredulous anger within him—yet t

esture would satisfy his greed for every evidence of her

stood looking down at her naked body, he leaned over, she his voice—it was more a statement of contemptuous triumph a question "You want it?" Her answer was more a gasp a word, her eyes closed her mouth open "Yes"

knew that what she felt with the skin of her arms was the of his shirt, she knew that the lips she felt on her mouth his but in the rest of her there was no distinction between ing and her own, as there was no division between body and Through all the steps of the years behind them, the steps a course chosen in the courage of a single loyalty their of existence—chosen in the knowledge that nothing will be that one must make one's own desire and every shape of its ment—through the steps of shaping metal, rails and motors—ad moved by the power of the thought that one remakes the for one's enjoyment, that man's spirit gives meaning to ent matter by molding it to serve one's chosen goal The led them to the moment when, in answer to the highest of values, in an admiration not to be expressed by any other form bute one's spirit makes one's body become the tribute re-g it—as proof, as sanction, as reward—into a single sensa-of such intensity of joy that no other sanction of one's nce is necessary He heard the moan of her breath, she felt udder of his body, in the same instant.

ter IX THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE

oked at the glowing bands on the skin of her arm, spaced like ets from her wrist to her shoulder They were strips of sun-from the Venetian blinds on the window of an unfamiliar She saw a bruise above her elbow, with dark beads that had lood. Her arm lay on the blanket that covered her body She ware of her legs and hips, but the rest of her body was only e of lightness, as if it were stretched restfully across the air lace that looked like a cage made of sunrays

ning to look at him she thought From his aloofness from anner of glass-enclosed formality from his pride in never made to feel anything—to this to Hank Rearden in bed her, after hours of a violence which they could not name not in words or in daylight—but which was in their eyes as ooked at each other which they wanted to name, to stress, ow at each other's face

saw the face of a young girl, her lips suggesting a smile as if ural state of relaxation were a state of radiance a lock of alling across her cheek to the curve of a naked shoulder, yes looking at him as if she were ready to accept anything ght wish to say as she had been ready to accept anything he ished to do

reached over and moved the lock of hair from her cheek

cautiously as if it were fragile He held it back with his fingertips and looked at her face Then his fingers closed suddenly in her hair and he raised the lock to his lips The way he pressed his mouth to it was tenderness but the way his fingers held it was despa...

He dropped back on the pillow and lay still, his eyes closed He

...

He got up not looking at her His face was blank and close again He picked up his clothes from the floor and proceeded to dress standin
her He acted
that she was
the belt of his slacks had the rapid precision of performing a du
She lay back on the pillow watching him enjoying the sight of hi figure in motion She liked the gray slacks and shirt—the expe mechanic of the John Galt Line she thought in the stripes of su light and shadow like a convict behind bars But they were not ba any longer they were the cracks of a wall which the John Galt Li had broken the advance notice of what awaited them outside, b yond the Venetian blinds—she thought of the trip back on th new rail with the first train from Wyatt Junction—the trip bac to her office in the Taggart Building and to all the things now ope for her to win—but she was free to let it wait she did not want think of it she was thinking of the first touch of his mouth c hers—she was free to feel it to hold a moment when nothing el was of any concern—she smiled defiantly at the strips of sky beyo the blinds

I want you to know this"

He stood by the bed, dressed looking down at her His voice h pronounced it evenly with great clarity and no inflection S looked up at him obediently He said

What I feel for you is contempt But it s nothing compared the contempt I feel for myself I don t love you I ve never lov anyone I wanted you from the first moment I saw you I want you as one wants a whore—for the same reason and purpose spent two years damning myself because I thought you were abo a desire of this kind You re not You re as vile an animal as I a

ha

I

th

... not to have you be anything but the bitch you are All greatness that I saw in you—I would not take it in exchange the obscenity of your talent at an animal s sensation of pleasu We were two great beings you and I proud of our strength were we? Well this is all that s left of us—and I want no self-decept about it"

He spoke slowly as if lashing himself with his words Th was no sound of emotion in his voice only the lifeless pull effort it was not the tone of a man s willingness to speak but ugly tortured sound of duty

I held it as my honor that I would never need anyone I need
it It had been my pride that I had always acted on my con
tions I've given in to a desire which I despise It is a desire
it has reduced my mind my will my being my power to exist
to an abject dependence upon you—not even upon the Dagny Tag
whom I adm red—but upon your body your hands your
mouth and the few seconds of a convulsion of your muscles I
d never broken my word Now I ve broken an oath I gave for
I had ne

only desire I m going to have you—I d give up everything I
n for it, the mills the Metal the achievement of my whole life
going to have you at the pr ce of more than myself at the
ice of my self-esteem—and I want you to know it I want no
etense no evasion no silent indulgence with the nature of our
tions left unnamed I want no pretense about love value loyalty
respect. I want no shred of honor left to us to hide behind
e never begged for mercy I ve chosen to do this—and I'll take
the consequences including the full recognit on of my cho ce
s depravity—and I accept it as such—and there is no he ght of
tue that I wouldn t give up for it Now if you wish to slap my
ce go ahead I wish you would

She had listened sitting up straight, holding the blanket clutched
her throat to cover her body At first, he had seen her eyes
ow ng dark with incredulous shock Then it seemed to him that
e was l stening with greater attent veness but see ng more than
s face ... fixed on his She looked as if
velation that had never con-
me ray of l ght were growing
its reflection on hers as she
nishing then the wonder—he
w her face being smoothed into a strange serenity that seemed
et and glittering at once

When he stopped she burst out laughing

The shock to him was that he heard no anger in her laughter
n release not as
ne discovery that

ate sweep of her
floor and k cked
t as de She stood facing him naked She said

"I want you Hank I m much more of an animal than you th nk.
wanted you from the first moment I saw you—and the only thing
m ashamed of is that I did not know it I did not know why for
two years the brightest moments I found were the ones in your
office where I could lift my head to look up at you I d d not
know the nature of what I felt in your presence nor the reason
know it now That is all I want Hank I want you in my be
d you are free of me for all the rest of your time There's noth

you'll have to pretend—don't think of me, don't feel, don't care I do not want your mind, your will, your being or your soul, long as it s to me that you will come for that lowest one of yo desires I am an animal who wants nothing but that sensation pleasure which you despise—but I want it from you You'd g up any height of virtue for it, while I—I haven't any to give There's none I seek or wish to reach I am so low that I wo exchange the greatest sight of beauty in the world for the sight your figure in the cab of a railroad engine. And seeing it, I wo not be able to see it indifferently You don't have to fear that you now dependent upon me It's I who will depend on any whim yours You'll have me any time you wish, anywhere, on any term Did you call it the obscenity of my talent? It's such that it gi you a safer hold on me than on any other property you own. Y may dispose of me as you please—I'm not afraid to admit it—I ha nothing to protect from you and nothing to reserve You think th this is a threat to your achievement, but it is not to mine I w sit at my desk, and work, and when the things around me get ha to bear, I will think that for my reward I will be in your bed th night Did you call it depravity? I am much more depraved th you are you hold it as your guilt, and I—as my pride I'm mo proud of it than of anything I've done, more proud than of bui ing the Line If I'm asked to name my proudest attainment, I w say I have slept with Hank Rearden I had earned it"

When he threw her down on the bed, their bodies met like two sounds that broke against each other in the air of the roo the sound of his tortured moan and of her laughter.

* *

The rain was invisible in the darkness of the streets but it hu like the sparkling fringe of a lampshade under the corner lig Fumbling in his pockets James Taggart discovered that he had his handkerchief He swore half-aloud, with resentful malice, as the loss, the rain and his head cold were someone's personal c spiracy against him

Th

suc

col

I

he had realized suddenly that there were no other appointme that he had a long evening ahead and no one to help him kill it T front pages of the newspapers were screaming of the triumph the John Galt Line, as the radios had screamed it yesterday and through the night The name of Taggart Transcontinental stretched in headlines across the continent, like its track, and had smiled in answer to the

at the head of the long

Directors spoke about the

Exchange, while they cau

ment with his sister—just in case, they said—and commented it was fine, it was holeproof, there was no doubt but that would have to turn the Line over to Taggart Transcontinental

ght. He could not be alone, not in the next few hours, yet there was nobody to call He did not want to see people He kept seeing the eyes of the men of the Board when they spoke about his great ss a sly, filmy look that held contempt for him and, more terrifyingly, for themselves

He walked, head down, a needle of rain pricking the skin of his neck once in a while He looked away whenever he passed a newsstand. The papers seemed to shriek at him the name of the John Galt Line, and another name which he did not want to hear Ragnar Danneskjold A ship bound for the People's State of Norway with an Emergency Gift cargo of machine tools had been seized by Ragnar Danneskjold last night That story disturbed him in some personal manner which he could not explain The feeling seemed to have some quality in common with the things he felt about the John Galt Line

It's because he had a cold, he thought he wouldn t feel this way if he didn t have a cowld, a man couldn t be expected to be in top form when ... did they ex- ... the question ... He fumbled in his handkerchief again, cursed and decided that he d better stop somewhere to buy some paper tissues

Across the square of what had once been a busy neighborhood, he saw the lighted windows of a dime store still open hopefully at this late hour There's another one that will go out of business pretty soon, he thought as he crossed the square the thought gave him pleasure

There were glaring lights inside a few tired salesgirls among a spread of deserted counters and the screaming of a phonograph record being played for a lone listless customer in a corner The music swallowed the sharp edges of Taggart s voice he asked for paper tissues in a tone which implied that the salesgirl was responsible for his cold The girl turned to the counter behind her but turned back once to glance swiftly at his face She took a packet, but stopped hesitating studying him with peculiar curiosity

"Are you James Taggart?" she asked.

"Yes!" he snapped "Why?"

"Oh!"

She gasped like a child at a burst of firecrackers she was looking at him with a glance which he had thought to be reserved only for movie stars

"I saw your picture in the paper this morning, Mr Taggart," she said very rapidly, a faint flush appearing on her face and ... "It said what a great achievement it was and how it really you who had done it all, only you didn't want it to be ...

"Oh said Taggart He was smiling

"You look just like your picture" she said in immense aston ment and added Imagine you walking in here like this in p son!

Shouldn t I?" His tone was amused

I mean everybody s talking about it, the whole country you re the man who did it—and here you are! I've never seen important person before I ve never been so close to anything portant I mean to any newspaper news"

He had never had the experience of seeing his presence color to a place he entered the girl looked as if she was not t any longer as if the dime store had become a scene of dr and wonder

"Mr Taggart is it true what they said about you in the pap

What did they say?

"About your secret"

'What secret?

"Well they said that when everybody was fighting about y br dge whether it would stand or not you didn t argue with th you just went ahead because you knew it would stand when body else was sure of it—so the Line was a Taggart project you were the guiding spirit behind the scenes but you kep secret because you didn t care whether you got credit for i not.

He had seen the mimeographed release of his Public Relat Department Yes he said it s true The way she looked at made him feel as if it were

"It was wonderful of you Mr Taggart"

"Do you always remember what you read in the newspa so well in such detail?"

Why yes I guess so—all the interesting things The things I like to read about them Nothing big ever happen me'

She said it gaily without self pity There was a young determ brusqueness in her voice and movements She had a head of dish brown curls wide set eyes a few freckles on the bridge o upturned nose He thought that one would call her face attra if one ever noticed it but there was no particular reason to n it It was a common little face except for a look of alertness eager interest a look that expected the world to contain an citing secret behind every corner

"Mr Taggart how does it feel to be a great man?"

How does it feel to be a little girl?

She laughed Why wonderful

'Then you re better off than I am"

Oh how can you say such a—"

"Maybe you re lucky if you don t have anyth ng to do with b g events in the newspapers Big What do you call big anyw

"Why important."

"What s important?"

"You re the one who ought to tell me that, Mr Taggart."

ou, of all people saying

; what you want to know

"

g his face with a look of
:ern such as no one had ever granted him You re worn out,
Taggart she said earnestly "Tell them to go to hell."
Whom?"
Whoever s getting you down. It isn t right "
What isn't?"
That you should feel this way You ve had a tough time, but
've l cked them all, so you ought to enjoy yourself now You've
ned it."
And how do you propose that I enjoy myself?"
Oh, I don't know But I thought you d be having a celebration
ght, a party with all the big shots and champagne and things
en to you like keys to cities a real swank party like that—
tead of walking around all by yourself, shopping for paper hand
ch efs of all fool things!"
"You give me those handkerchiefs before you forget them alto-
her" he said handing her a dime "And as to the swank party,
l it occur to you that I might not want to see anybody tonight?"
She considered it earnestly "No" she said, "I hadn't thought
it. But I can see why you wouldn t"
"Why?" It was a question to which he had no answer
"Nobody s really good enough for you, Mr Taggart" she an-
vered very s mply not as flattery but as a matter of fact.
"Is that what you th nk?"
"I don t think I like people very much, Mr Taggart. Not most
them"
"I don't either Not any of them"
"I thought a man like you—you wouldn t know how mean they
an be and how they try to step on you and ride on your back,
f you let them I thought the big men in the world could get
way from them and not have to be flea bait all of the time, but
naybe I was wrong"
"What do you mean flea bait?"
"Oh, it s just something I tell myself when things get tough—
hat I've got to beat my way out to where I won t feel like I m flea
bit en all the time by all kinds of lousiness—but maybe it s the
same anywhere only the fleas get bigger"
"Much bigger"
She remained silent as if consider ng something "It s funny,"
she sa d sadly to some thought of her own.
"What s funny?"
"I read a book once where it said that great men are always
unhappy and the greater—the unhappier It didn't make sense to me.
But maybe it s true"
"It s much truer than you th nk"
She looked away, her face disturbed

"Why do you worry so much about the great men?" he asked. What are you, a hero worshipper of some kind?"

She turned to look at him and he saw the light of an inner smile, while [illegible] person [illegible] answe[illegible] there to look up to?

A screeching sound, neither quite bell nor buzzer, rang out suddenly and went on ringing with nerve grating insistence

She jerked her head as if awakening at the scream of an alarm clock then sighed "That's closing time, Mr Taggart," she said regretfully

"Go get your hat—I'll wait for you outside," he said.

She stared at him, as if among all of life's possibilities this was one she had never held as conceivable.

"No kidding?" she whispered.

No kidding"

She whirled around and ran like a streak to the door of the employees' quarters forgetting her counter, her duties and all feminine concern about never showing eagerness in accepting a man's invitation

He stood looking after her for a moment his eyes narrowed. He did not name to himself the nature of his own feeling—never to identify his emotions was the only steadfast rule of his life he merely felt it—and this particular feeling was pleasurable, which was the only identification he cared to know But the feeling was the product of a thought he would not utter He had often met girls of the lower classes who had put on a brash little act, pretending to look up to him spilling crude flattery for an obvious purpose he had neither liked nor resented them, he had found a bored amusement in their company and he had granted them the status of his equals in a game he considered natural to both players involved This girl was different The unuttered words in his mind were The damn little fool means it

That he waited for her impatiently, when he stood in the rain on the sidewalk that she was the one person he needed tonight did not disturb him or strike him as a contradiction He did not name the nature of his need The unnamed and the unuttered could not clash into a contradiction

When she came out he noted the peculiar combination of her shyness and of her head held high. She wore an ugly raincoat, made worse by a gob of cheap jewelry on the lapel and a small hat of plush flowers planted defiantly among her curls Strangely the lift of her head made the apparel seem attractive it stressed how well she wore even the things she wore

"Want to come to my place and have a drink with me?" he asked

She nodded silently solemnly as if not trusting herself to find the right words of acceptance Then she said not looking at him, as if stating it to herself, "You didn't want to see anybody tonight,

t you want to see *me* " He had never heard so solemn a tone pr de in anyone s voice

She was silent when she sat beside him in the taxicab She looked at the skyscrapers they passed. After a while she said "I ard that things like this happened in New York but I never ought they d happen to me "

"Where do you come from?"

"Buffalo "

"Got any family?"

She hesitated "I guess so In Buffalo "

"What do you mean you guess so?"

"I walked out on them

"Why?"

"I thought that if I ever was to amount to anything I had to t away from them clean away "

"Why? What happened?"

"Nothing happened And nothing was ever going to happen. hat s what I couldn't stand "

"What do you mean?"

"Well they well I guess I ought to tell you the truth Mr Taggart My old man s never been any good and Ma didn t care whether he was or not and I got sick of it always turning out hat I was the only one of the seven of us that kept a job and the est of them always being out of luck one way or another I hought if I didn't get out, it would get me—I d rot all the way hrough, like the rest of them So I bought a railroad ticket one lay and left. Didn't say good bye They didn t even know I was o ng " She gave a soft startled little laugh at a sudden thought. "Mr Taggart " she said "it was a Taggart train."

"When did you come here?

"Six months ago "

"And you're all alone?"

"Yes " she said happily

"What was it you wanted to do?"

"Well you know—make something of myself get somewhere."

"Where?"

"Oh I don't know, but but people do things in the world. I saw pictures of New York and I thought —she po nted at the g nt buildings beyond the streaks of rain on the cab window— I thought, somebody built those buildings—he d dn t just s t and whine that the kitchen was filthy and the roof leak ng and the Mr Tageart" ght at him— t That s what Not enough

o lift a finger Not enough to empty the garbage pail And the woman next door saying it was my duty to help them saying it made no difference what became of me or of her or of any of us, because what could anybody do anyway!" Beyond the br ght lock of her eyes he saw someth ng with n her that was hurt hard. "I don't want to talk about them " she said. "Not w th y

This—my meeting you I mean—that's what they couldn't have That's what I'm not going to share with them It's mine, not theirs

"How old are you?" he asked.

"Nineteen"

When he looked at her in the lights of his living room he thought that she'd have a good figure if she'd eat a few meals she seemed too thin for the height and structure of her bones. She wore a tight shabby little black dress which she had tried to camouflage by the gaudy plastic bracelets tinkling on her wrist. She stood looking at his room as if it were a museum where she must touch nothing and reverently memorize everything

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Cherryl Brooks"

"Well sit down"

He mixed the drinks in silence while she waited obediently sitting on the edge of an armchair When he handed her a glass she swallowed dutifully a few times then held the glass clutched in her hand He knew that she did not taste what she was drinking did not notice it had no time to care

He took a gulp of his drink and put the glass down with irritation he did not feel like drinking either He paced the room sullenly knowing that her eyes followed him enjoying the knowledge enjoying the sense of tremendous significance which his movements his cuff links his shoelaces his lampshades and ashtrays acquired in that gentle unquestioning glance

"Mr Taggart what is it that makes you so unhappy?"

"Why should you care whether I am or not?

"Because — well if you haven't the right to be happy and proud who has?"

"That's what I want to know—who has? He turned to her abruptly, the words exploding as if a safety fuse had blown. He didn't invent iron ore and blast furnaces did he?

Who?

"Rearden He didn't invent smelting and chemistry and air compression He couldn't have invented his Metal but for thousands and thousands of other people *His* Metal! Why does he think it's his? Why does he think it's his invention? Everybody uses the work of everybody else Nobody ever invents anything"

She said puzzled But the iron ore and all those other things were there all the time Why didn't anybody else make that Metal but Mr Rearden did?

"He didn't do it for any noble purpose he did it just for his own profit he's never done anything for any other reason

What's wrong with that Mr Taggart? Then she laughed softly as if at the sudden solution of a riddle 'That's nonsense Mr Taggart You don't mean it You know that Mr Rearden has *earned* all his profits and so have you You're saying those things just to be modest when everybody knows what a great job you people have done—you and Mr Rearden and your sister, who is such a wonderful person!"

eah? Thats what *you* think Shes a hard insensitive woman spends her life building tracks and bridges not for any great but only because thats what she enjoys doing If she enjoys hat is there to admire about her do ng it? I m not so sure it was —build ng that Line for all those prosperous industrialists in rado when there are so many poor people in blighted areas need transportat on."

But, Mr Taggart it was you who fought to build that Line"

Yes because it was my duty—to the company and the stock ers and our employees. But dont expect me to enjoy it I m so sure it was great—inventing this complex new Metal when many nations are in need of plain iron—why do you know the People's State of China hasnt even got enough nails to wooden roofs over peoples heads?"

But but I dont see that thats your fault"

gre
yc
he
rld,
to gape at them at grade crossings—because they cant invent collaps ble bridges at a t me when the suffering of mankind ghs on the r spirit"

She was looking at him silently respectfully her joyous eagerness

at a

y though, he said his tone eas er livel er the of a confidence to a pal "You should have seen Orren Boyle esterday when the first flash came through on the radio from Wyatt Junct on! He turned green—but I mean *green* the color of a fish thats been lying around too long Do you know what he did last n ght by way of taking the bad news? H red himself a suite at the Valhalla Ho el—and you know what that —and the last I heard, he was still there today drinking h mself under the table and the beds wi h a few choice friends of his and half the female populat on of upper Amsterdam Avenue!"

"Who is Mr Boyle?" she asked stupefied

"Oh a fat slob thats incl ned to overreach h mself A smart guy who gets too smart at times. You should have seen h face yester day! I got a kick out of that. That—and Dr Floyd Ferris That goofy didnt like it a b oh not a b —the expert Dr Ferris of the Sta e Science Institute the servant of the people ... his rather vocabulary—but he carried it off ... only you could see him squirm ng in every paragraph I mean that interview he gave out this ... The country gave Rearden that Metal ... country something in return That was pretty

who s been riding on the gravy train and well con sidering That was better than Bertram Scudder—Mr Scudder couldn't think of anything but No comment when his fellow gentlemen of the press asked him to vo ce his sentiments No comment—from Bertram Scudder who s never been known to shut his trap from the day he was born about anything you ask him or don t ask Abyssinian poetry or the state of the ladies rest rooms in the textile industry! And Dr Pritchett the old fool is going around saying that he knows for certain that Rearden didn t invent that Metal—because he was told by an unnamed reliable source that Rearden stole the formula from a penniless inventor whom he murdered

He was chuckling happily She was listening as to a lecture on higher mathematics grasping nothing not even the style of the language a style which made the mystery greater because she was certain that it did not mean—coming from him—what it would have meant anywhere else

He refilled his glass and drained it but his gaiety vanished abruptly He slumped into an armchair facing her looking at her from under his bald forehead h s eyes blurred

Shes coming back tomorrow he said with a sound like a chuckle devoid of amusement

"Who?

My sister My dear sister Oh, she'll think shes great, wo she?

You dislike your sister Mr Taggart?" He made the same sou its meaning was so eloquent that she needed no other answ "Why? she asked

"Because she th nks shes so good What right has she to th it? What right has anybody to th nk hes good? Nobodys good

"You don t mean it Mr Taggart"

"I mean, we re only human beings—and what s a human be A weak ugly sinful creature born that way rotten in his bone so humility is the one virtue he ought to practice He ought spend his life on his knees begging to be forgiven for his d existence When a man thinks he s good—*that s* when he s rot Pride is the worst of all sins no matter what he s done"

But if a man knows that what he s done is good?"

"Then he ought to apologize for it

"To whom?"

"To those who haven t done it."

"I I don t understand

Of course you don t It takes years and years of study in higher reaches of the intellect Have you ever heard of *The M physical Contrad ct ons of tl e Un verse* by Dr Simon Pritche She shook her head frightened How do you know whats g anyway? Who knows what s good? Who can ever know? There no absolutes—as Dr Pritchett has proved irrefutably Nothin absolute Everyth ng is a matter of op nion How do you k that the bridge hasn t collapsed? You only *think* it hasn't. I

ou know that there s any bridge at all? You think that a sys of ph losophy—such as Dr Pritchett s—is just something emic remote, impractical? But it isn't. Oh boy how it isn t!"
But, Mr Taggart the Line you built—"
Oh whats that Line anyway? It s only a material achievement hat of any importance? Is there any greatness in anything ma al? Only a low animal can gape at that bridge—when there are many h gher things in life But do the higher things ever get ogni on? Oh no! Look at people All that hue and cry and nt pages about some trick arrangement of some scraps of matter they care about any nobler issue? Do they ever give front
notice or appreciate a whether it s true that this depraved world" "I ll tell you I'll e hallmark of virtue it means that he is a

saw the puzzled anxious look of her face. "[illegible] Taggart you got everyth ng you wanted Now you have [illegible] lroad in the country the newspapers call you the greatest [illegible] execu ive of the age they say the stock of your company made a fortune for you overn ght, you got everything you could ask for—aren t you glad of it?"
In the brief space of his answer she felt frightened sens ng a sudden fear w thin him. He answered "No".
She didn t know why her voice dropped to a whisper "You d rather the bridge had collapsed?"
"I haven't said that!" he snapped sharply Then he shrugged and waved his hand in a gesture of contempt "You don t understand"
"I'm sorry Oh I know that I have such an awful lot to learn"
I am talking about a hunger for something much beyond that ge A hunger that nothing material w ll ever satisfy"
"Wha
"Oh
re back tagged in ma ich man
What s any h man achievement anyway? The earth is only an atom whirling in the universe—of what im portance is that bridge to the solar system?"
A sudden, happy look of understanding cleared her eyes "It s great of you, Mr Taggart to th nk that your own ach evement isn't good enough for you I guess no matter how far you ve gone you want to go st ll farther You re ambitious That s what I admire amb tion I mean, do ng th ngs not stopping and giving up doing I understand, Mr Taggart even if I don't under stand all the b g thoughts."
"You'll

Her glance of admiration had not changed He walked acr the room moving in that glance as in a gentle spotlight. H w to refill his glass A
bar He caught a glim
by a sloppy sagging
grace the thinning h
denly that she did not see him at all what she saw was t t ot figure of a builder with proudly straight shoulders and wind bl hair He chuckled aloud feeling that this was a good joke on feeling dimly a satisfaction that resembled a sense of victory superiority of having put something over on her

Sipping his drink he glanced at the door of his bedroom thought of the usual ending for an adventure of this kind. thought that it would be easy the girl was too awed to resist. saw the reddish bronze sparkle of her hair—as she sat head b under a light—and a wedge of smooth glowing skin on her sh der He looked away Why bother?—he thought.

The hint of d s re that he felt was no more than a sens physical d scom f rt The sharpest impulse in his mind nagg ng

ing The prospect of experiencing pleasure was not worth effort he had no desire to experience pleasure

"It s getting late he said Where do you live? Let me give another drink and then I ll take you home"

When he said good bye to her at the door of a miserable r ing house in a slum neighborhood she hesitated fighting not to a question which she desperately wished to ask him

Will I she began and stopped.

What?

No nothing nothing!"

He knew that the question was Will I see you again?" It him pleasure not to answer even though he knew that she w

She glanced up at him once more as if it were perhaps fo last time then said earnestly her voice low Mr Taggart I'm grateful to you because you I mean any other man have tried to I mean that s all he d want but you re so better than that oh so much better!"

He leaned closer to her with a faint interested smile V you have?" he asked

She drew back from him, in sudden terror at her own words I didn t mean it that way! she gasped Oh God I wasn t h or or She blushed furiously, whirled around and van h ng i n the ...

...ouse
...oggy sel
sa ...virtue—
it ...
cheering along the three hundred mile track of the John Galt

en their train reached Philadelphia, Rearden left her without
ord, as if the nights of their return journey deserved no ac-
station platforms
went on to New
of her apartment
g and Dagny knew that she had expected it
He said nothing when he entered, he looked at her, making his
There was the
ad-
and
owly
und him, this was her apartment, the one place in the city that

ins on the John Galt Line, because the schedule I'd planned
n't be enough for the business that's piled up in just three
ys."

"A great many people wanted to see you today, didn't they?"

"Why, yes."

"They'd have given anything just for a word with you, wouldn't
y?"

"I . . . I suppose so."

"The reporters kept asking me what you were like. A young
y from a local sheet kept saying that you were a great woman
t said he'd be afraid to speak to you if he ever had the chance
them
nbling
gth to
t your
ra."

She caught the sinking gasp of her breath she knew his
e stood straight, her arms at her sides, her face austere, as if

unflinching endurance, she stood under the praise as under a las ing of insults

"They kept asking you questions, too, didn't they?" He spo intently, leaning forward "And they looked at you with admirati They looked, as if you stood on a mountain peak and they cou only take their hats off to you across the great distance Did they?"

Yes " she whispered

"They looked as if they knew that one may not approach you speak in your presence or touch a fold of your dress They knew and it's true They looked at you with respect, didn't they? Th looked up to you?"

He seized her arm threw her down on her knees, twisting body against his legs and bent down to kiss her mouth laughed soundlessly her laughter mocking, but her eyes half-clos veiled with pleasure

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he intensity
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torture he

He looked at her as if the question were a sight visualized every detail, a sight he loathed but would not abandon, she he the contempt in his voice, the hatred, the suffering—and an eagerness that did not pertain to torture, he had asked question, holding her body tight against him

She answered evenly, but he saw a dangerous flicker in her e as of a warning that she understood him too well "There was one other Hank"

"When?"

"When I was seventeen"

"Did it last?"

"For some years"

"Who was he?"

She drew back, lying against his arm, he leaned closer, his taut, she held his eyes "I won t answer you"

"Did you love him?"

"I won t answer"

"Did you like sleeping with him?"

"Yes!"

The laughter in her eyes made it sound like a slap across face, the laughter of her knowledge that this was the answer dreaded and wanted

[illegible]

Who was he?"

She did *not* answer, she looked at him, her eyes dark and oddly lliant, and he saw that the shape of her mouth distorted by pain, s the shape of a mocking smile

He *felt* it change to a shape of surrender, under the touch of his He held her body as if the violence and the despair of the way *took* her could wipe his unknown rival out of existence out of past, *and* more as if it could transform any part of her even rival, *into* an instrument of his pleasure He knew, by the gerness of her movement as her arms seized him, that this was way *she* wanted to be taken.

* *

The silhouette of a conveyor belt moved against the strips of fire the sky, raising coal to the top of a distant tower as if an inex-ustible *number* of small black buckets rode out of the earth in a agonal line *across* the sunset The harsh distant clatter kept ing through the rattle of the chains which a young man in blue eralls was fastening over the machinery, securing it to the flat-s lined *on* the siding of the Quinn Ball Bearing Company of onnecticut.

Mr Mow

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e vital o

"Another *one*?" asked Mr Mowen, jerking his thumb at the ant, even though he knew the answer

"Huh?" asked the young man, who had not noticed him standing ere

"Another company moving to Colorado?"

"Uh-huh"

"It's the third one from Connecticut in the last two weeks" said r Mowen "And when you look at what's happening in New rsey Rhode Island, Massachusetts and all along the Atlantic ast . ." The young man was not looking and did not seem listen. "It's like a leaking faucet said Mr Mowen "and all the ater's running out to Colorado All the money" The young man ung the chain across and followed it deftly climbing over the big ape covered with canvas "You'd think people would have some eling for their native state some loyalty But they're run-ing away I don't know what's happening to people"

"It's the Bill," said the young man

"What Bill?"

"The Equalization of Opportunity Bill"

"How do you mean?"

"I hear Mr Quinn was making plans a year ago to open a ranch in Colorado The Bill knocked that out cold So now he ade up his mind to move there lock, stock and barrel"

"I don't see where that makes it right The Bill was

Its a rotten shame—old firms that have been here for genera tions There ought to be a law "

The young man worked swiftly competently as if he enjoyed it Behind h m st
the sky Four ls
of smoke weav lf
mast in the reddish glow of the evening

Mr Mowen had l ved with every smokestack of that skyline since the days of his father and grandfather He had seen the conveyor belt from his office window for thirty years That the Quinn Ball Bearing Company should vanish from across the street had seemed inconceivable he had known about Quinns decision and had not believed it or rather he had bel eved it as he believed any words he heard or spoke as so
cal reality Now he knew
on the siding as if he st l

It isn't rigl t" he said he was speaking to the skyline at — but the young man above was the only part of it that could hear him "Thats not the way it was in my fathers time I m not a big shot I don't want to fight anybody Whats the matter with the world? There was no answer Now you for instance—are they taking you along to Colorado?

Me? No I dont work here I m just transient labor Just picked up this job helping to lug the stuff out "

Well where are you go ng to go when they move away?

Havent any idea

What are you going to do if more of them move out?"

Wait and see

Mr Mowen glanced up dubiously he could not tell whether the answer was intended to apply to him or to the young man But the young mans attention was fixed on his task he was not looking down He moved on to the shrouded shapes on the next flatcar and Mr Mowen followed looking up at him pleading with some thing up in space I've got rights havent I? I was born here expected the old compan es to be here when I grew up I expected to run the plant like my father did A man is part of his community hes got a right to count on it hasnt he? Something ought to be done about it "

About what?

"Oh I know you think its great dont you?—that Taggart boom and Rearden Metal and the gold rush to Colorado and the drunken spree out there with Wyatt and his bunch expanding the production like kettles bo l ng over! Everybody thinks its great—thats all you hear anywhere you go—people are slap happy making plans like six year-olds on a vacation—youd think it was a national honeymoon of some kind or a permanent Fourth of July!

The young man sa d nothing

Well I dont think so said Mr Mowen He lowered h s voice The newspapers dont say so either—mind you that—the newspapers arent saying anyth ng "

Mr Mowen heard no answer only the clanking of the chains

"Why are they all running to Colorado?" he asked What have ɔey got down there that we haven t got?"

The young man grinned "Maybe its something you ve got that ɔey haven't got."

"What? The young man did not answer I don't see it Its a ackward primitive unenlightened place They dont even have a modern government Its the worst government in any state The laziest It does nothing—outside of keeping law courts and a police department It doesn t do anything for the people It doesn t help anybody I dont see why all our best companies want to run here."

The young man glanced down at him but did not answer

Mr Mowen sighed "Things aren t right," he said 'The Equalization of Opportunity Bill was a sound idea. Theres got to be a chance for everybody Its a rotten shame if people like Quinn take unfair advantage of it. Why didnt he let somebody else start manufacturing ball bearings in Colorado? I wish the Colorado people would leave us alone That Stockton Foundry out there had no right going into the switch and signal business Thats been my business for years I have the right of seniority it isn't fair, s dog-eat-dog competition newcomers shouldnt be allowed to muscle in Where am I going to sell switches and signals? There were two big railroads out in Colorado Now the Phoenix Durango s one so theres just Taggart Transcontinental left It isn t fair—their forcing Dan Conway out. Theres got to be room for competition

And I've been waiting six months for an order of steel from Orren Boyle—and now he says he cant promise me anything because Rearden Metal has shot his market to hell theres a run on that Metal Boyle has to retrench It isn t fair—Rearden being allowed to ruin other peoples markets that way And I want

and get it He

tes—nobody

Wyatt and

just as good

tal

last week"

thats busy!

they re building four new open hearth furnaces and they've got more coming New furnaces he said looking off to the south "Nobodys built a new furnace on the Atlantic Coast for the past five years " He stood against the sky on the top of a shrouded motor looking off at the dusk with a faint smile of eagerness and longing as one looks at the distant vision of ones love "They re busy " he said

Then his smile vanished abruptly the way he jerked the chain was the first break in the smooth competence of his movements It looked like a jolt of anger

Mr Mowen looked at the skyline at the belts, the wheels the smoke—the smoke that settled heavily peacefully across the evening air stretching in a long haze all the way to the city of York somewhere beyond the sunset—and he felt reassured

thought of New York in its ring of sacred fires the ring of smokestacks gas tanks cranes and high tension lines He felt a current of power flowing through every grimy structure of his familiar street he liked the figure of the young man above him there was something reassuring in the way he worked something that blended with the skyline Yet Mr Mowen wondered why he felt that a crack was growing somewhere, eating through the solid, the eternal walls

"Something ought to be done" said Mr Mowen "A friend of mine went out of business last week—the oil business—had a couple of wells down in Oklahoma—couldn t compete with Ellis Wyatt. It isn t fair They ought to leave the little people a chance They ought to place a limit on Wyatt s output He shouldn t be allowed to produce so much that he'll swamp everybody else off the market

I got stuck in New York yesterday, had to leave my car there and come home on a damn commuters local couldn t get any gas for the car they said there s a shortage of oil in the city . Things aren't right Something ought to be done about it

Looking at the skyline Mr Mowen wondered what was the nameless threat to it and who was its destroyer

"What do you want to do about it? asked the young man.

Who me? said Mr Mowen I wouldn t know I m not a big shot I can't solve national problems I just want to make a living All I know is somebody ought to do something about it Things aren t right Listen—what s your name?"

Owen Kellogg"

Listen Kellogg what do you think is going to happen to the world?

You wouldn t care to know

A whistle blew on a distant tower the night shift whistle, and Mr Mowen realized that it was getting late He sighed buttoning his coat turning to go

Well things are being done he said "Steps are being taken Constructive steps The Legislature has passed a Bill giving wide powers to the Bureau of Economic Planning and National Resources They ve appointed a very able man as Top Co ordinator Can't say I've heard of him before but the newspapers said he s a man to be watched His name is Wesley Mouch

* *

Dagny stood at the window of her living room looking at the city It was late and the lights were like the last sparks left glittering on the black remnants of a bonfire

She felt at peace and she wished she could hold her mind still to let her own emotions catch up with her to look at every moment of the month that had rushed past her She had had no time to feel that she was back in her own office at Taggart Transcontinental there had been so much to do that she forgot it was a return from exile She had not noticed what Jim had said on her return or whether he had said anything There had been only one person whose reaction she had wanted to know she had telephoned the Wayne Falkland Hotel but Señor Francisco d Anconia she w

aid, had gone back to Buenos Aires

She remembered the moment when she signed her name at the bottom of a long legal page, it was the moment that ended the John Galt Line Now it was the Rio Norte Line of Taggart Transcontinental again—except that the men of the train crews refused to give up its name She, too, found it hard to give up, she forced herself not to call it "the John Galt" and wondered why that required an effort, and why she felt a faint wrench of sadness

One evening, on a sudden impulse, she had turned the corner of the Taggart Building, for a last look at the office of John Galt, Inc., in the alley, she did not know what she wanted—just to see it, she thought. A plank barrier had been raised along the sidewalk the old building was being demolished, it had given up, at last She had climbed over the planks and, by the light of the street lamp that had once thrown a stranger's shadow across the pavement, she had looked in through the window of her former office Nothing was left of the ground floor, the partitions had been torn down, there were broken pipes hanging from the ceiling and a pile of rubble on the floor There was nothing to see

She had asked Rearden whether he had come there one night last spring and stood outside her window, fighting his desire to enter But she had known, even before he answered, that he had not. She did not tell him why she asked it. She did not know why that memory still disturbed her at times

Beyond the window of her living room the lighted rectangle of the calendar hung like a small shipping tag in the black sky It read September 2 She smiled defiantly remembering the race she had run against its changing pages there were no deadlines now, she thought, no barriers, no threats, no limits

She heard a key turning in the door of her apartment this was the sound she had waited for, had wanted to hear tonight

Rearden came in, as he had come many times using the key she had given him, as sole announcement He threw his hat and coat down on a chair with a gesture that had become familiar, he wore the formal black of dinner clothes

"Hello," she said

"I'm still waiting for the evening when I won't find you in," he answered.

"Then you'll have to phone the offices of Taggart Transcontinental."

"Any evening? Nowhere else?"

"Jealous, Hank?"

"No Curious what it would feel like to be"

He stood looking at her across the room refusing to let himself approach her, deliberately prolonging the pleasure of knowing that he could do it whenever he wished She wore the tight gray skirt of an office suit and a blouse of transparent white cloth tailored like a man's shirt, the blouse flared out above her waistline stressing the trim flatness of her hips, against the glow of a lamp behind her, she could see the slender silhouette of her body within the circle of the blouse

"How was the banquet?" she asked

"Fine I escaped as soon as I could. Why didn t you come? You were invited"

"I didn t want to see you in public"

He glanced at her as if stressing that he noted the full meaning of her answer then the lines of his face moved to the hint of a

What happened?

"Nothing Just a lot of speeches"

"Was t an ordeal for you?"

"No Yes in a way I had really wanted to enjoy it

"Shall I get you a drink?"

"Yes will you?

She turned to go He stopped her grasping her shoulders from behind he bent her head back and kissed her mouth. When h raised h s head she pulled it down again with a demanding gestu of ownership as if stressing her right to do it. Then she steppe away from him

Never mind the drink he sa d "I didn't really want it except for seeing you wait on me

'Well then let me wait on you"

"No

He smiled stretching himself out on the couch his hands cross under his head He felt at home it was the first home he had ev found

"You know the worst part of the banquet was that the only w of every person present was to get it over with" he said. "Wh I can t understand is why they wanted to do it at all They did have to Certainly not for my sake

She picked up a cigarette box extended it to him then h the flame of a lighter to the tip of his cigarette in the deliber manner of waiting on him She smiled in answer to his chuck then sat down on the arm of a chair across the room

Why d d you accept their invitation Hank? she asked "You always refused to join them"

"I didn t want to refuse a peace offer—when I've beaten th and they know it I ll never join them but an invitation to app as a guest of honor—well I thought they were good losers thought it was generous of them"

Of *them*?

"Are you going to say of *me?*"

"Hank! After all the h

when I've proved my case when I ve proved it so loudly

ught their real motive for inviting me was their appreciation of Metal, and—"

he smiled in the brief space of h s m... n she knew the sentence ...hat, I would

...it what their ...otive at all ...un something m me, or to save face with the public There was no purpose of kind about it no meaning They didn't really care when they ounced the Metal—and they don't care now They're not really id that I'll drive them all off the market—they don't care enough n about that Do you know what that banquet was like? It's as they'd heard that there are values one is supposed to honor l this is what one does to honor them—so they went through motions, like ghosts pulled by some sort of distant echoes m a better age I I couldn't stand it"

he said, her face tight, "And you don't think you're generous!'

He glanced up at her, his eyes brightened to a look of amuse-nt. "Why do they make you so angry?"

he said her voice low to hide the sound of tenderness, "You nted to enjoy it . . "

'It probably serves me right. I shouldn't have expected anything on't know what it was that I wanted.'

'I do"

'I've never liked occasions of that sort I don't see why I ex ted it to be different, this time You know I went there ing almost as if the Metal had changed everything even peo-

'Oh yes, Hank, I know!"

'Well, it was the wrong place to seek anything Do you member? You said once that celebrations should be only for se who have something to celebrate"

The dot of her lighted cigarette stopped in mid air she sat still had never spoken to him of that party or of anything related his home In a moment, she answered quietly "I remember" 'I know what you meant I knew it then, too"

He was looking straight at her She lowered her eyes

He remained silent, when he spoke again his voice was gay "The rst thing about people is not the insults they hand out but the mpliments I couldn't bear the kind they spouted tonight par-ticlarly when they kept saying how much everybody needs me—y the city, the country and the whole world, I guess Apparently, ir idea of the height of glory is to deal with people who need m. I can't stand people who need me." He glanced at her o you need me?"

She answered, her voice earnest, "Desperately"

He laughed. "No Not the way I meant. You didn't say it the y they do"

"How did I say

"Like a trader—who pays for what he wants They say it [illegible] beggars who use a tin cup as a claim check."

I pay for it Hank?"

"Dont look innocent You know exactly what I mean."

"Yes" she whispered she was smiling.

"Oh to hell with them!" he said happily stretching his [illegible] shifting the position of his body on the couch stressing the luxu of relaxation Im no good as a public figure Anyway it does matter now We dont have to care what they see or don't s They'll leave us alone Its clear track ahead Whats the ne undertaking Mr Vice-President?

A transcontinental track of Rearden Metal"

"How soon do you want it?"

"Tomorrow morning Three years from now is when I'll it"

"Think you can do it in three years?"

If the John Galt if the Rio Norte Line does as well as i doing now

"Its going to do better Thats only the beginning"

"I [illegible] [illegible] omes

Im

and

"(

"I

last

own [illegible] in San Francisco if somebody wants to [illegible] a banquet there

"In three years I'll have mills pouring Rearden Metal in Col ado in Michigan and in Idaho Thats *my* installment plan."

"Your own mills? Branches?

"Uh huh"

What abo t the E [illegible]

" [illegible] o yo

We - [illegible] go

to t [illegible] vant

stop things now? Who'll listen to the bilge? Theres a lobby the better kind of men working in Washington right th s mome They re going to get the Equalization Bill scrapped at the next s sion"

I I hope so"

Ive had a terrible time these last few weeks getting the n furnaces started but its all set now theyre be ng built I c sit back and take it easy I can sit at my desk rake in the mon loaf like a bum watch the orders for the Metal pouring in a play favor tes all over the place Say whats the first tr you've got for Philadelphia tomorrow morning?"

"Oh I dont know"

"You dont? Whats the use of an Operating Vice President? have to be at the mills by seven tomorrow Got anything runn around six?"

"Five-thirty A.M. is the first one I think."

Will you wake me up in time to make it or would you rather er the train held for me?"

I'll wake you up"

he sat, watching him as he remained silent He had looked tired n he came in the lines of exhaustion were gone from his face

Dagny" he asked suddenly, his tone had changed, there was e hidden, earnest note in his voice, "why didn t you want ee me in public?"

I don't want to be part of your official life"

He did not answer; in a moment, he asked casually, "When did take a vacation last?"

I think it was two no, three years ago"

What did you do?"

Went to the Adirondacks for a month Came back in a week"

I did that five years ago Only it was Oregon" He lay flat on back, looking at the ceiling "Dagny lets take a vacation to er Lets take my car and drive away for a few weeks any-re, just drive down the back roads, where no one knows us ll leave no address we wont look at a newspaper, we wont h a phone

mile

You can take a few weeks off, can t you?" he said "Things are and going now Its safe We wont have another chance in the t three years"

All right, Hank," she said, forcing her voice to sound calmly eless.

Will you?"

When do you want to start?"

Monday morning"

All right."

he turned to step away He seized her wrist pulled her down ng her body to lie stretched full length on top of him he held still her hair shoulder whispered,

shing her face He lay still, looking up at her is eyes narrowed bright flicker of some particular interest in his eyes intent d lly mocking She glanced down a strap of her slip had broken, a p hung diagonally from her one shoulder to her side and he looking at her breast under the transparent film of the blouse raised her hand to adjust the strap He slapped her hand down. smiled, in understanding in answering mockery She walked ly deliberately across the room and leaned against a table ng him her hands holding the table s edge her shoulders thrown k. It was the contrast he liked—the severity of her clot

and the half naked body, the railroad executive who was a wom
he owned

He sat up he sat leaning comfortably across the couch, his l
crossed and stretched forward, his hands in his pockets, looking
her with the glance of a property appraisal

"Did you say you wanted a transcontinental track of Reard
Metal, Mr Vice President?' he asked "What if I don't give it
you? I can choose my customers now and demand any price
please If this were a year ago, I would have demanded that y
sleep with me in exchange"

"I wish you had"

"Would you have done it?"

"Of course"

"As a matter of business? As a sale?"

"If you were the buyer You would have liked that, would
you?'

'Would you?"

"Yes " she whispered

He approached her, he grasped her shoulders and pressed
mouth to her breast through the thin cloth.

Then, holding her, he looked at her silently for a long mome
'What did you do with that bracelet?" he asked

They had never referred to it, she had to let a moment pass
regain the steadiness of her voice "I have it," she answered.

'I want you to wear it"

"If anyone guesses, it will be worse for you than for me"

'Wear it"

She brought out the bracelet of Rearden Metal. She extended
to him without a word, looking straight at him, the green blue cha
glittering across her palm Holding her glance, he clasped t
bracelet on her wrist In the moment when the clasp clicked sh
under his fingers, she bent her head down to them and kiss
his hand.

* *

The earth went flowing under the hood of the car Uncoiling fro
among the curves of Wisconsin s hills, the highway was the o
evidence of human labor, a precarious bridge stretched across
sea of brush, weeds and trees The sea rolled softly, in sprays
yellow and orange, with a few red jets shooting up on the hi
sides, with pools of remnant green in the hollows under a pure bl
sky [illegible]

[illegible] against the corner of the side window, her le
stretched forward, she liked the wide, comfortable space of t
car's seat and the warmth of the sun on her shoulders, she thoug
that the countryside was beautiful

"What I'd like to see," said Rearden, "is a billboard"

She laughed he had answered her silent thought. "Selling wh
and to whom? We haven't seen a car or a house for an hour"

"That's what I don't like about it" He bent forward a little, l

ıds on the wheel he was frowning Look at that road "

The long strip of concrete was bleached to the powdery gray of ıes left on a desert as if sun and snows had eaten away the traces ıres, oil and carbon, the lustrous polish of motion Green weeds e from the angular cracks of the concrete No one had used the d or repa red it for many years but the cracks were few

"It s a good road " said Rearden "It was built to last The man o built it must have had a good reason for expecting it to ry a heavy traffic in the years ahead "

"Yes "

"I don t like the looks of this "

"I don't either Then she smiled "But think how often we've ırd people complain that billboards ruin the appearance of the ıntryside Well there s the unruined countryside for them to ıire" She added "They re the people I hate "

She did not want to feel the uneasiness which she felt like a thin ck under her enjoyment of this day She had felt that uneasiness times in the last three weeks at the sight of the country stream past the wedge of the car s hood She smiled it was the hood t had been the immovable point in her field of vision while the th had gone by it was the hood that had been the center, the us the security in a blurred dissolving world the hood ore her and Rearden s hands on the wheel by her s de she led thinking that she was satisfied to let this be the shape of world

After the first week of their wandering when they had driven at ıdom at the mercy of unknown crossroads he had said to her morning as they started out "Dagny does resting have to be poseless?" She had laughed answering, No What factory do want to see?" He had smiled—at the guilt he did not have to ıme at the explanations he did not have to give—and he had ıwered, "It s an abandoned ore mine around Saginaw Bay that heard about They say it s exhausted

They had driven across Michigan to the ore mine They had lked through the ledges of an empty pit with the remnants of a ne like a skeleton bending above them against the sky and neone s rusted lunchbox clattering away from under their feet had felt a stab of uneasiness sharper than sadness—but arden had said cheerfully "Exhausted hell! I'll show them how ny tons and dollars I can draw out of this place!" On their way k to the car he had said "If I could find the right man I d f that mine for him tomorrow morning and set him up to work

The next day when they were driving west and south toward the ıns of Illinois he had said suddenly after a long silence "No have to wait till they junk the Bill The man who could work t mine wouldn t need me to teach him The man who d need wouldn't be worth a damn "

They could speak of their work as they always had with full con ence in being understood But they never spoke of each other led as if their passionate intimacy were a nameless physical

not to be identified in the communication between two minds Each night it was as if she lay in the arms of a stranger who let her se every shudder of sensation that ran through his body but wou never permit her to know whether the shocks reached any answerin tremor within him She lay naked at his side, but on her wri there was the bracelet of Rearden Metal

She knew that he hated the ordeal of signing the "Mr and Mr Smith on the registers of squalid roadside hotels There we evenings when she noticed the faint contraction of anger in th tightness of his mouth as he signed the expected names of th expected fraud anger at those who made fraud necessary S noticed indifferently the air of knowing slyness in the manner the hotel clerks which seemed to suggest that guests and cle alike were accomplices in a shameful guilt the guilt of seek pleasure But she knew that it did not matter to him when th were alone when he held her against him for a moment and s saw his eyes look alive and guiltless

They drove through small towns through obscure side roa through the kind of places they had not seen for years She f uneasiness at the sight of the towns Days passed before she reali what it was that she missed most a glimpse of fresh paint T houses stood like men in unpressed suits who had lost the de to stand straight the cornices were like sagging shoulders crooked porch steps like torn hem lines the broken windows l patches mended with clapboard The people in the streets stared the new car not as one stares at a rare sight but as if the glitter black shape were an impossible vision from another world Th were few vehicles in the streets and too many of them were ho

... of horsepo

-n Rear

al rail

n ancient locomo

They were seventy miles and an hour away from it when said Hank do you see the Taggart Comet being pulled across continent by a coal burner of that kind?"

What s the matter with you? Pull yourself together"

I m sorry It s just that I keep thinking it won t be any all my new track and all your new furnaces if we don t find so one able to produce Diesel engines If we don t find him fast"

"Ted Nielsen of Colorado is your man

"Yes if he finds a way to open his new plant He s sunk t money than he should into the bonds of the John Galt Line

"That s turned out to be a pretty profitable investment h it?"

"Yes but it s held him up Now he s ready to go ahead bu can t find the tools There are no machine tools to buy not *where*, not at any price He s getting nothing but promises

old junk to reclaim
—"

o a place I'd like to

re Anywhere Which place?"
is in Wisconsin There used to be a great motor company

u und it. What was the name of the factory?"
The Twentieth Century Motor Company"

ury Motor Company
"Hank, what if anything happens to Ted Nielsen?" she asked
denly, as they drove in silence.
Why should anything happen to him?"
I dont know, but . . well, there was Dwight Sanders He
shed. United Locomotives is done for now And the other
nts are in no condition to produce Diesels I've stopped listening
promises And . . . and of what use is a railroad without
tive power?"

or miles,
le colors
burning
unchecked, untouched abundance
Rearden smiled. "There's something to be said for the wilderness
n beginning to like it New country that nobody s discovered"
e nodded

way things grow I'd

they saw in the weeds
its of glass—the rem-

y charred posts the slab
—which had been a gas
o be noticed except by a
other year
looked away. They drove on not wanting to know what
lay hidden under the miles of weeds They felt the same wonder
a weight in the silence between them wonder as to how much
weeds had swallowed and how fast.
The road ended abruptly behind the turn of a hill

was a few chunks of concrete sticking out of a long pitted of tar and mud The concrete had been smashed by someone carted away; even weeds could not grow in the strip of earth le behind On the crest of a distant hill, a single telegraph pole sta slanted against the sky, like a cross over a vast grave

It took them three hours and a punctured tire to crawl in low through trackless soil, through gullies, then down ruts left wheels—to reach the settlement that lay in the valley beyond th hill with the telegraph pole

A few houses still stood within the skeleton of what had once be an industrial town Everything that could move, had moved aw but some human beings had remained The empty structures we vertical rubble they had been eaten, not by time but by me boards torn out at random missing patches of roofs holes left gutted cellars It looked as if blind hands had seized whatever fit the need of the moment, with no concept of remaining in exist the next morning The inhabited houses were scattered at rand among the ruins the smoke of their chimneys was the only mo ment v s ble in to [illegible] been a scho

[illegible]

Beyond the town, on a distant hill, stood the factory of Twentieth Century Motor Company Its walls, roof lines and smo stacks looked trim impregnable like a fortress It would h seemed intact but for a silver water tank the water tank tipped sidewise

They saw no trace of a road to the factory in the tangled m [illegible]

She was bent and swollen, barefooted, dressed in a garmen flour sacking She looked at the car without astonishment, with curiosity, it was the blank stare of a being who had lost capacity [illegible]

"Car [illegible]

The [illegible]

unable [illegible]

Rear [illegible] that one

"It s closed '

"I know it s closed But is there any way to get there?"

"I don't know"

"Is there any sort of road?"

"There s roads in the woods"

"Any for a car to drive through?"

"Maybe"

"Well, which would be the best road to take?"

"I don't know"

Through the open door, they could see the interior of her ho There was a useless gas stove, its oven stuffed with rags servin a chest of drawers There was a stove built of stones in a co

a few logs burning under an old kettle, and long streaks of rising up the wall A white object lay propped against the legs table it was a porcelain washbowl, torn from the wall of e bathroom, filled with wilted cabbages. A tallow candle stood bottle on the table. There was no paint left on the floor, its ds were scrubbed to a soggy gray that looked like the visual [illegible]

[illegible]

an, sullenly, one by one They stared at the car, not with the [illegible] es ready

[illegible]

There ain't any next town"

There are other towns somewhere I mean, how far?"

Yeah. Somewhere"

n the vacant space by the side of the house, they saw faded s hanging on a clothesline, which was a piece of telegraph wire. ree chickens pecked among the beds of a scraggly vegetable den, a fourth sat roosting on a bar which was a length of mber's pipe Two pigs waddled in a stretch of mud and refuse; stepping stones laid across the muck were pieces of the high-y's concrete

They heard [illegible]

[illegible]

s not lifting a hand for it, still clutching the two buckets If one re ever to see a man devoid of greed, thought Dagny, there he s.

"We don't need no money around here," he said.

"Don't you work for a living?"

"Yeah."

"Well, what do you use for money?"

The man put the buckets down, as if it had just occurred to him at he did not have to stand straining under their weight. "We on't use no money," he said. "We just trade things amongst us."

"How do you trade with people from other towns?"

"We don't go to no other towns"

"You don't seem to have it easy here."

"What's that to you?"

"Nothing Just curiosity. Why do you people stay here?"

My old man used to have a grocery store here Only the factory closed "

"Why didn't you move?

"Where to?

"Anywhere "

"What for?

Dagny was staring at the two buckets they were square tins with rope handles they had been oil cans

Listen said Rearden, "can you tell us whether there's a road to the factory?

'There's plenty of roads "

"Is there one that a car can take?"

"I guess so

'Which one?

The man weighed the problem earnestly for some moments Well now if you turn to the left by the schoolhouse he said and go on till you come to the crooked oak there's a road up there that's fine when it don't rain for a couple of weeks."

When did it rain last?

"Yesterday

Is there another road?

Well you could go through Hanson's pasture and across the woods and then there's a good solid road there all the way down to the creek."

"Is there a bridge across the creek?"

'No "

What are the other roads?

Well if it's a car road that you want, there's one the other sid of Miller's patch it's paved, it's the best road for a car you jus turn to the right by the schoolhouse and—

"But that road doesn't go to the factory does it?"

"No not to the factory

All right, said Rearden. Guess we'll find our own way"

He had pressed the starter when a rock came smashing into th windshield The glass was shatterproof but a sunburst of crack spread across it They saw a ragged little hoodlum vanishing behin a corner with a scream of laughter and they heard the shri laughter of children answering him from behind some windows crevices

[illegible] The man looked vap dly acro [illegible] l woman looked on w tho [illegible] watching without interest [illegible] on a photographic plate al sorbing visual shapes because they were there to be absorbed, bu unable ever to form any estimate of the objects of her vision.

Dagny had been studying her for some minutes The swol shapelessness of the woman's body did not look like the product age and neglect it looked as if she was pregnant This seemed in possible but glancing closer Dagny saw that her dust-colored ha was not gray and that there were few wrinkles on her face it w only the vacant eyes the stooped shoulders the shuffling mov

ents that gave her the stamp of senility.

Dagny leaned out and asked, "How old are you?"

The woman looked at her [illegible]

[illegible]

"Yes."

"God, how did they ever come to such a state?"

He shrugged "Who is John Galt?"

The last thing they saw, as they left the town, was a billboard design was still visible on its peeling strips, imprinted in the ad gray that had once been color It advertised a washing machine

In a distant field, beyond the town, they saw the figure of a man ving slowly, contorted by the ugliness of a physical effort beyond proper use of a human body he was pushing a plow by hand.

They reached the factory of the Twentieth Century Motor Com- ny two miles and two hours later They knew, as they climbed hill, that their quest was useless A rusted padlock hung on the or of the main entrance, but the huge windows were shattered l the place was open to anyone, to the woodchucks, the rabbits l the dried leaves that lay in drifts inside

The factory had been gutted long ago The great pieces of chinery had been moved out by some civilized means—the neat es of their bases still remained in the concrete of the floor The t had gone to random looters There was nothing left, except use which the neediest tramp had found worthless, piles of sted, rusted scraps, of boards, plaster and glass splinters—and steel stairways, built to last and lasting, rising in trim spirals the roof.

They stopped in the great hall where a ray of light fell diagonally m a gap in the ceiling, and the echoes of their steps rang around m, dying far away in rows of empty rooms A bird darted from ong the steel rafters and went in a hissing streak of wings out into sky

"We'd better look through it just in case," said Dagny "You take shops and I'll take the annexes Let's do it as fast as possible"

"I don't like to let you wander around alone I don't know how e they are, any of those floors or stairways"

"Oh, nonsense! I can find my way around a factory—or in a cking crew Let's get it over with I want to get out of here"

When she walked through the silent yards—where steel bridges l hung overhead, tracing lines of geometrical perfection across sky—her only wish was not to see any of it, but she forced self to look. It was like having to perform an autopsy on the body one's love. She moved her glance as an automatic searchlight, her h clamped tight together She walked rapidly—there was no essity to pause anywhere

It was in a room of what had been the laboratory that she was a coil of wire that made her stop The coil protruded ile of junk. She had never seen that particular

wires yet it seemed familiar, as if it touched the hint of some memory faint and very distant. She reached for the coil but could not move it it seemed to be part of some object buried in the pile.

The room looked as if it had been an experimental laboratory—if she was right in judging the purpose of the torn remnants she saw on the walls a great many electrical outlets bits of heavy cable lead conduits glass tubing built in cabinets without shelves or doors There was a great deal of glass rubber, plastic and metal in the junk pile and dark gray splinters of slate that had been a blackboard Scraps of paper rustled dryly all over the floor There were also remnants of things which had not been brought here by the owner of that room popcorn wrappers, a whiskey bottle, a confession magazine

She attempted to extricate the coil from the scrap pile It would not move it was part of some large object She knelt and began to dig through the junk

She had cut her hands she was covered with dust by the time she stood up to look at the object she had cleared It was the broken remnant of the model of a motor Most of its parts were missing but enough was left to convey some idea of its former shape and purpose

She had never seen a motor of this kind or anything resembling it She could not understand the peculiar design of its parts or the functions they were intended to perform

She examined the tarnished tubes and odd-shaped connections She tried to guess their purpose her mind going over every type of motor she knew and every possible kind of work its parts could perform None fitted the model It looked like an electric motor but she co ld no l g h f n nd d to h m It was n de

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wreckage seizing every piece of paper in sight, flinging it awa searching further Her hands were shaking

She found part of what she hoped had remained in existence was a thin sheaf of typewritten pages clamped together—the re nant of a manuscript Its beginning and end were gone the bits paper left under the clamp showed the thick number of pages had once contained The paper was yellowed and dry The man script had been a description of the motor

From the empty enclosure of the plant s powerhouse Reard heard her voice screaming Hank! It sounded like a scream terror

He ran in the direction of the voice He found her standing in t middle of a room her hands bleeding her stockings torn, her s

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"Are you hurt? What happened?"

o! . Oh, never mind, don't look at me! I m all right Look
is Do you know what that is?
'hat did you do to yourself?"
had to dig it out of there I m all right"
'ou're shaking"
'ou will too in a moment Hank! Look at it Just look and
ne what you think it is"
: glanced down, then looked attentively—then he was sitting
he floor, studying the object intently "It s a queer way to put
otor together," he said, frowning
lead this," she said, extending the pages
: read, looked up and said, "Good God!"
e was sitting on the floor beside him, and for a moment they
d say nothing else.
t was the coil," she said She felt as if her mind were racing,
could not keep up with all the things which a sudden blast had
ed to her vision, and her words came hurtling against one
her "It was the coil that I noticed first—because I had seen
[illegible] years ago, when I

[illegible]

e thinking of it—they worked on it, they spent years on ex
ments, but they couldn t solve it and they gave it up It was
gotten for generations I didn t think that any living scientist
r thought of it now But someone did Someone has solved
now today! Hank, do you understand? Those men long
tried to invent a motor that would draw static electricity
m the atmosphere, convert it and create its own power as it
nt along They couldn't do it. They gave it up" She pointed
the broken shape. "But there it is"
He nodded. He was not smiling He sat looking at the remnant,
ent on some thought of his own it did not seem to be a happy
ought.
"Hank! Don't you understand what this means? It's the greatest
volution in power motors since the internal-combustion engine—
eater than that! It wipes everything out—and makes everything

[illegible]

ze of a single Diesel unit, and with ten times the power [illegible]
enerator, working on a few drops of fuel with no limits to its
nergy The cleanest, swiftest, cheapest means of motion ever
evised Do you see what this will do to our transportation systems
nd to the country—in about one year?"
There was no spark of excitement in his face. He said slowly,
Who designed it? Why was it left here?"
"We'll find out."
He weighed the pages in his hand reflectively "Dagny,"
ked, "if you don't find the man who made it, will you be
to reconstruct that motor from what is left?"

She took a long moment, then the word fell with a sinking sound "No"

'Nobody will He had it all right It worked—judging by what he writes here It is the greatest thing I've ever laid eyes on It was We can't make it work again To supply what's missing would take a mind as great as his."

"I'll find him—if I have to drop every other thing I'm doing."

"—and if he's still alive"

She heard the unstated guess in the tone of his voice "Why d you say it like that?"

"I don't think he is If he were, would he leave an invention o this kind to rot on a junk pile? Would he abandon an achievemen of this size? If he were still alive you would have had the locomo tives with the self generators years ago And you wouldn't hav had to look for him because the whole world would know h name by now"

"I don't think this model was made so very long ago"

He looked at the paper of the manuscript and at the rusty tarnis of the motor 'About ten years ago, I'd guess Maybe a litt longer"

'We've got to find him or somebody who knew him This more important—'

"—than anything owned or manufactured by anyone today don't think we'll find him And if we don't, nobody will be ab to repeat his performance Nobody will rebuild his motor Ther not enough of it left It's only a lead, an invaluable lead, but would take the sort of mind that's born once in a century, to co plete it. Do you see our present-day motor designers attempt it?"

"No"

"There's not a first rate designer left There hasn't been a n idea in motors for years That's one profession that seems to dying—or dead"

'Hank, do you know what that motor would have meant, built?'

He chuckled briefly "I'd say about ten years added to the l of every person in this country—if you consider how many thi it would have made easier and cheaper to produce how many ho of human labor it would have released for other work, and h much more anyone's work would have brought him Locomoti What about automobiles and ships and airplanes with a mo of this kind? And tractors And power plants All hooked to unlimited supply of energy, with no fuel to pay for, except a pennies' worth to keep the converter going That motor could h set the whole country in motion and on fire It would have brou an electric light bulb into every hole, even into the homes of th people we saw down in the valley"

"It would have? It will I'm going to find the man who m it"

"We'll try"

He rose abruptly but stopped to glance down at the broken mnant and said with a chuckle that was not gay "*There* was the otor for the John Galt Line"

Then he spoke in the brusque manner of an executive "First, :'ll try to see if we can find their personnel office here We'll ok for their records, if there s any left. We want the names of eir research staff and their engineers I don t know who owns is place now and I suspect that the owners will be hard to nd, or they wouldn t have let it come to this Then we'll go over very room in the laboratory Later, we'll get a few engineers to y here and comb the rest of the place"

... moment on the threshold

"

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eft in the refuse It was the one thing nobody found worth the rouble of taking"

"That's what frightens me about this" he answered

... They found it by

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... laboratory notes, but none referred to ... were no pages of the manuscript among them The popcorn wrappers and the whiskey bottle testified to the kind of invading hordes that had rolled through the room like waves washing the remnants of destruction away to unknown bottoms

They put aside a few bits of metal that could have belonged to the motor, but these were too small to be of value The motor looked as if parts of it had been ripped off perhaps by someone who thought he could put them to some customary use What had mained was too unfamiliar to interest anybody

On aching knees, her palms spread flat upon the gritty floor, e felt the anger trembling within her the hurting helpless anger at answers the sight of desecration. She wondered whether some e's diapers hung on a clothesline made of the motor's missing res—whether its wheels had become a rope pulley over a com unal well—whether its cylinder was now a pot containing gera ums on the window sill of the sweetheart of the man with the hiskey bottle

There was a remnant of light on the hill but a blue haze was noving in upon the valleys and the red and gold of the leaves as spreading to the sky in strips of sunset

It was dark when they finished. She rose and leaned against the mpty frame of the window for a touch of cool air on her *forehead* The sky was dark blue "It could have set the whole country motion and on fire" She looked down at the motor *She*] out at the country She moaned suddenly, bit by a single

shudder and dropped her head on her arm standing pressed to the frame of the window

"What s the matter?" he asked

She did not answer

He looked out Far below in the valley in the gathering night there trembled a few pale smears which were the lights of tallow candles

Chapter X WYATT S TORCH

God have mercy on us ma am!" said the clerk of the Hall o Records Nobody knows who owns that factory now I gues nobody will ever know it

The clerk sat at a desk in a ground floor office where dust la undisturbed on the files and few visitors ever called He looke at the shining automobile parked outside his window in the mudd square that had once been the center of a prosperous count seat he looked with a faint wistful wonder at his two unknown vi itors

"Why? asked Dagny

He pointed helplessly at the mass of papers he had taken out (the files The court will have to decide who owns it which don t think any court can do If a court ever gets to it. I don think it will

"Why? What happened?"

"Well it was sold out—the Twentieth Century I mean Th Twentieth Century Motor Company It was sold twice at th same time and to two different sets of owners That was sort of big scandal at the t me two years ago and now it s just"—h pointed—"just a bunch of paper lying around waiting for a cou hearing I don t see how any judge will be able to untangle an property rights out of it—or any right at all

Would you tell me please just what happened?"

"Well the last legal owner of the factory was The Peopl Mortgage Company of Rome Wisconsin That s the town th other side of the factory thirty miles north That Mortgage Cor pany was a sort of no sy outfit that d d a lot of advertising abo easy credit Mark Yonts was the head of it Nobody knew whe he came from and nobody knows where he s gone to now b what they discovered the morning after The People s Mortga Company collapsed was that Mark Yonts had sold the Twentie

[illegible] Dakota a
[illegible] bank in
[illegible] discover
[illegible] meal G

only knows where and to whom So it seems like everybody ow the place—and nobody That s how it stands now—the Sou Dakotans and the bank and the attorney for the creditors of T People s Mortgage Company all suing one another all claimi

is factory, and nobody having the right to move a wheel in it, cept that there's no wheels left to move"

"Did Mark Yonts operate the factory before he sold it?"

"Lord, no, ma'am! He wasn't the kind that ever operates anying He didn't want to *make* money, only to *get* it. Guess he got too—more than anyone could have made out of that factory."

He wondered why the blond, hard faced man who sat with the oman in front of his desk, looked grimly out the window at eir car, at a large object wrapped in canvas roped tightly under e raised cover of the car's luggage compartment.

"What happened to the factory records?'

"Which do you mean, ma'am?"

"Their production records Their work records Their . . . personnel files"

"Oh, there's nothing left of that now There's been a lot of looting going on. All the mixed owners grabbed what furniture or ngs they could haul out of there, even if the sheriff did put a dlock on the door The papers and stuff like that—I guess it s all taken by the scavengers from Starnesville, that's the place wn in the valley, where they're having it pretty tough these days ey burned the stuff for kindling, most likely"

"Is there anyone left here who used to work in the factory?" ked Rearden.

"No, sir Not around here They all lived down in Starnesville"

"All of them?" whispered Dagny, she was thinking of the ruins he . . . engineers, too?"

"Yes, ma'am That was the factory town They've all gone, long ."

"Do you happen to remember the names of any men who worked re?"

"No, ma'am"

"What owner was the last to operate the factory?" asked Rearden

"I couldn t say, sir There's been so much trouble up there and place has changed hands so many times, since old Jed Starnes d. He's the man who built the factory He made this whole t of the country, I guess He died twelve years ago"

"Can you give us the names of all the owners since?"

"No, sir We had a fire in the old courthouse, about three years , and all the old records are gone I dont know where you ld trace them now"

"You dont know how this Mark Yonts happened to acquire factory?"

"Yes, I know that. He bought it from Mayor Bascom of Rome. w Mayor Bascom happened to own it, I dont know."

"Where is Mayor Bascom now?"

"Still there, in Rome"

"Thank you very much," said Rearden, rising "We'll call on ."

They were at the door when the clerk asked, "What is it you king for, sir?"

"We're looking for a friend of ours," said Rearden. "A friend we've lost, who used to work in that factory."

* *

Mayor Bascom of Rome, Wisconsin, leaned back in his chair; his chest and stomach formed a pear-shaped outline under his soiled shirt The air was a mixture of sun and dust, pressing heavily upon the porch of his house He waved his arm, the ring on his finger flashing a large topaz of poor quality

"No use, no use, lady, absolutely no use," he said "Would be just a waste of your time, trying to question the folks around here. There's no factory people left, and nobody that would remember much about them So many families have moved away that what's left here is plain no good, if I do say so myself, plain no good, just being Mayor of a bunch of trash"

He had offered chairs to his two visitors, but he did not mind it if the lady preferred to stand at the porch railing He leaned back, studying her long lined figure, high-class merchandise, he thought, but then the man with her was obviously rich.

Dagny stood looking at the streets of Rome There were houses, sidewalks, lampposts, even a sign advertising soft drinks, but they looked as if it were now only a matter of inches and hours before the town would reach the stage of Starnesville

"Naw, there's no factory records left" said Mavor Bascom "If [illegible]

[illegible] One's got to be practical"

Through the dusty windowpanes, they could see the living room of his house there were Persian rugs on a buckled wooden floor, a portable bar with chromium strips against a wall stained by the seepage of last year's rains an expensive radio with an old kerosene lamp placed on top of it

"Sure, it's me that sold the factory to Mark Yonts Mark was a nice fellow, a nice, lively, energetic fellow Sure, he did trim a few corners, but who doesn't? Of course, he went a bit too far That, I *didn't* expect I thought he was smart enough to stay within the law—whatever's left of it nowadays"

Mayor Bascom smiled, looking at them in a manner of placid frankness His eyes were shrewd without intelligence, his smile good natured without kindness

"I don't think you folks are detectives," he said, "but even if you were, it wouldn't matter to me I didn't get any rake-off from Mark, he didn't let me in on any of his deals, I haven't any idea where he's gone to now" He sighed 'I liked that fellow Wish he'd stayed around Never mind the Sunday sermons He had to live, didn't he? He was no worse than anybody, only smarter Some get caught at it and some don't—that's the only difference . Nope, I didn't know what he was going to do with it, when he bought that factory Sure he paid me quite a bit more than the old booby trap was worth Sure, he was doing me a favor when [he] bought it Nope I didn't put any pressure on him to make him

uy it. Wasn't necessary I d done him a few favors before There s lenty of laws thats sort of made of rubber and a mayors in position to stretch them a bit for a friend Well what the hell? hats the only way anybody ever gets rich in this world"—he lanced at the luxurious black car—"as you ought to know
"You were telling us about the factory, said Rearden trying) control himself
"What I can't stand" said Mayor Bascom "is people who talk bout principles No principle ever filled anybody s milk bottle The nly thing that counts in life is solid material assets It s no time or theories, when everything is falling to pieces around us Well ie—I don't aim to go under Let them keep their ideas and I'll take he factory I don t want ideas, I just want my three square meals day"
"Why did you buy that factory?
"Why does anybody buy any business? To squeeze whatever can e squeezed out of it I know a good chance when I see it It was bankruptcy sale and nobody much who d want to bid on the old tess. So I got the place for peanuts Didn t have to hold it long ither—Mark took it off my hands in two three months Sure it ras a smart deal, if I say so myself. No big business tycoon could ave done any better with it.'
"Was the factory operating when you took it over?"
"Naw It was shut down."
"Did you attempt to reopen it?"
"Not me I'm a practical person"
"Can you recall the names of any men who worked there?"
"No Never met 'em"
"Did you move anything out of the factory?"
"Well, I'll tell you I took a look around—and what I liked ras old Jeds desk. Old Jed Starnes He was a real big shot in his ime. Wonderful desk, solid mahogany So I carted it home And ome executive dont know who he was had a stall shower in his athroom the like of which I never saw A glass door with a mer naid cut in the glass real art work and hot stuff too hotter than ny oil painting So I had that shower lifted and moved here What he hell I owned it, didn't I? I was entitled to get something val uable out of that factory"
"Whose bankruptcy sale was it when you bought the factory?"
"Oh, that was the big crash of the Community National Bank n Madison. Boy was that a crash! It just about finished the whole tate of Wisconsin—sure finished this part of it Some say it was his motor factory that broke the bank but others say it was only he last drop in a leaking bucket, because the Community National had bum investments all over three or four states Eugene Lawson ras the head of it. The banker with a heart they called him He was on to fa[illegible] three years ago"

busted three months later" He sighed "It hit the folks pretty hard around here They all had their life savings in the Community National'

Mayor Bascom looked regretfully past his porch railing at his town He jerked his thumb at a figure across the street It was a white haired charwoman, moving painfully on her knees, scrubbing the steps of a house

'See that woman for instance? They used to be solid, respectable folks Her husband owned the dry-goods store He worked all his life to provide for her in her old age, and he did, too, by the time he died—only the money was in the Community National Bank."

'Who operated the factory when it failed?"

"Oh that was some quicky corporation called Amalgamated Service, Inc Just a puff ball Came up out of nothing and went back to it."

"Where are its members?"

"Where are the pieces of a puff ball when it bursts? Try and trace them all over the United States Try it."

'Where is Eugene Lawson?"

"Oh him? He's done all right. He's got a job in Washington—in the Bureau of Economic Planning and National Resources"

Rearden rose too fast, thrown to his feet by a jolt of anger, then said, controlling himself "Thank you for the information."

"You're welcome, friend, you're welcome,' said Mayor Bascom placidly "I don't know what it is you're after, but take my word for it, give it up There's nothing more to be had out of that factory"

"I told you that we are looking for a friend of ours"

"Well, have it your way Must be a pretty good friend, if you'll go to so much trouble to find him, you and the charming lady who is not your wife"

Dagny saw Rearden's face go white, so that even his lips became a sculptured feature, indistinguishable against his skin. "Keep your dirty—" he began, but she stepped between them

"Why do you think that I am not his wife?" she asked calmly

Mayor Bascom looked aston [illegible] he had made the remark without mal [illegible] playing his shrewdness to his p [illegible]

'Lady, I've seen a lot in m [illegible] "Married people don't look as if they have a bedroom on [illegible] minds when they look at each other In this world, either you're virtuous or you enjoy yourself Not both, lady, not both"

"I've asked him a question," she said to Rearden in time to silence him "He's given me an instructive explanation."

"If you want a tip, lady," said Mayor Bascom, 'get yourself a wedding ring from the dime store and wear it. It's not sure fire, but it helps"

"Thank you," she said "Good bye"

The stern, stressed calm of her manner was a command that made Rearden follow her back to their car in silence.

ney were miles beyond the town when he said, not looking at his voice desperate and low, "Dagny, Dagny, Dagny . . . sorry!"

m not."

oments later, when she saw the look of control returning to face, she said, "Don't ever get angry at a man for stating the ."

That particular truth was none of his business"

His particular estimate of it was none of your concern or ."

e said through his teeth, not as an answer, but as if the single ght battering his brain turned into sounds against his will, "I dn't protect you from that unspeakable little—"

didn't need protection."

e remained silent, not looking at her

Hank, when you're able to keep down the anger, tomorrow or week, give some thought to that man's explanation and see if recognize any part of it."

e jerked his head to glance at her, but said nothing.

hen he spoke, a long time later, it was only to say in a tired, voice, "We can't call New York and have our engineers come to search the factory We can't meet them here We can't let e known that we found the motor together I had forgn all that . . . up there . . in the laboratory"

Let me call Eddie, when we find a telephone I'll have him two engineers from the Taggart staff I'm here alone, on my tion, for all they'll know or have to know"

hey drove two hundred miles before they found a long-distance phone line When she called Eddie Willers, he gasped, hearing voice

Dagny! For God's sake, where are you?"

In Wisconsin. Why?"

I didn't know where to reach you. You'd better come back at : As fast as you can."

What happened?"

Nothing—yet. But there are things going on which . . . You'd er stop them now, if you can. If anybody can"

What things?"

Haven't you been reading the newspapers?"

No"

I can't tell you over the phone. I can't give you all the details ny, you'll think I'm insane, but I think they're planning to kill orado"

I'll come back at once," she said.

* *

Cut into the granite of Manhattan, under the Taggart Terminal, re were tunnels which had once been used as sidings, at a time n traffic ran in clicking currents through every artery of the minal every hour of the day The need for space had ough the years, with the shrinking of the traffic, and the nels had been abandoned, like dry river beds, a few

mained as blue patches on the granite over rails left to rust on the ground

Dagny placed the remnant of the motor into a vault in one of the tunnels, the vault had once contained an emergency electric generator, which had been removed long ago She did not trust the useless young men of the Taggart research staff, there were only two engineers of talent among them, who could appreciate her discovery She had shared her secret with the two and sent them to search the factory in Wisconsin. Then she had hidden the motor where no one else would know of its existence

When her workers carried the motor down to the vault and departed she was [illegible] face but she stopped key [illegible] thrown her at th [illegible] were the moment to make her decision

Her office car was waiting for her at one of the Terminal platforms attached to the end of [illegible] for Washington [illegible]

the things she had found on her return to New York, the thing Eddie begged her to fight

She had tried to think, but she could see no way of fighting, n[illegible] rules of battle, no weapons Helplessness was a strange experience new to her, she had never found it hard to face things and mak[e] decisions b[u]t she [illegible] as a fog wi[illegible] [illegible] liquid- [illegible] re se[illegible] it mo[illegible]

her glance, she had no glance to move and focus

The Union of Locomotive Engineers was demanding that t[he] maximum speed of all trains on the John Galt Line be reduc[ed] to sixty miles an hour The Union of Railway Conductors a[nd] Brakemen was demanding that the length of all freight trains [on] the John Galt Line be reduced to sixty cars

The states of Wyoming, New Mexico, Utah and Arizona w[ere] demanding that the number of trains run in Colorado not exc[eed] the number of trains run in each of these neighboring states

A group headed by Orren Boyle was demanding the passage o[f] [illegible]

Fair Share Law to give every customer who wanted it an e[qual] supply of Rearden Metal

A group headed by Bertram Scudder was demanding the pas[sage] of a Public Stability Law, forbidding Eastern business firms [to] move out of their states

Wesley Mouch Top Co-ordinator of the Bureau of Econ[omic] Planning and National Resources, was issuing a great many s[illegible]

ints, the content and purpose of which could not be defined, cept that the words "emergency powers" and "unbalanced economy" kept appearing in the text every few lines

"Dagny by what right?" Eddie Willers had asked her his voice iet, but the words sounding like a cry By what right are ey all doing it? By what right?"

She had confronted James Taggart in his office and said "Jim, is is your battle I've fought mine You're supposed to be an expert dealing with the looters Stop them."

... ect to run the

... your national ... to run—and ... onomy if my ilroad collapses!"

"I see no necessity for panic"

"Jim, do I have to explain to you that the income from our Rio orte Line is all we've got, to save us from collapsing? That we eed every penny of it, every fare every carload of freight—s fast as we can get it?" He had not answered "When we have use every bit of power in every one of our broken-down Diesels, hen we don't have enough of them to give Colorado the service t needs—what's going to happen if we reduce the speed and the ngth of trains?"

"Well there's something to be said for the unions viewpoint too With so many railroads closing and so many railroad men out of work, they feel that those extra speeds you've established on the Rio Norte Line are unfair—they feel that there should be more trains, instead so that the work would be divided around—they feel that it's not fair for us to get all the benefit of that new rail, they want a share of it, too"

"Who wants a share of it? In payment for what?" He had not answered. "Who'll bear the cost of two trains doing the work of one?" He had not answered "Where are you going to get the cars and the engines?" He had not answered "What are those men going to do after they've put Taggart Transcontinental out of existence?"

"I fully intend to protect the interests of Taggart Transcontinental"

"How?" He had not answered "How—if you kill Colorado?"

"It seems to me that before we worry about giving some people a chance to expand we ought to give some consideration to the people who need a chance of bare survival"

"If you kill Colorado what is there going to be left for your damn looters to survive on?"

"You have always been opposed to every progressive social measure. I seem to remember that you predicted disaster when we passed the Anti-dog-eat-dog Rule—but the disaster has not come"

"Because I saved you, you rotten fools! I won't be able to save

this time!" He had shrugged, not looking at her "And if I don't, who will?" He had not answered

It did not seem real to her, here, under the ground Thinking of it here, she knew she could have no part in Jim's battle There was no action she could take against the men of undefined thought, of unnamed motives of unstated purposes, of unspecified morality There was nothing she could say to them—nothing would be heard or answered What were the weapons, she thought, in a realm where reason was not a weapon any longer? It was a realm she could not enter She had to leave it to Jim and count on his self interest. Dimly, she felt the chill of a thought telling her that self interest was not Jim s motive

She looked at the object before her, a glass case containing the remnant of the motor The man who made the motor—she thought suddenly, the thought coming like a cry of despair She felt a moment s helpless longing to find him, to lean against him and let him tell her what to do A mind like his would know the way to win the battle

She [illegible] of the under groun [illegible] of fin [illegible] delay [illegible] Mowen!—to plead with Bertram Scudder? She saw the motor, pleted, built into an engine that pulled a train of two hundred ca down a track of Rearden Metal at two hundred miles an hou When the vision was within her reach, within the possible, w she to give it up and spend her time bargaining about sixty mil and sixty cars? She could not descend to an existence where h brain would explode under the pressure of forcing itself not to ou distance incompetence She could not function to the rule of Pu down—keep down—slow down—don t do your best, it is n wanted!

She turned resolutely and left the vault, to take the train f Washington

It seemed to her, as she locked the steel door, that she hea a faint echo of steps She glanced up and down the dark curve the tunnel There was no one in sight, there was nothing but string of blue lights glistening on walls of damp granite.

* *

Rearden could not fight the gangs who demanded the laws T choice was to fight them or to keep his mills open He had lost supply of iron ore He had to fight one battle or the other Th was no time for both.

He had found on his return, that a scheduled shipment of had not been delivered No word or explanation had been hea from Larkin When summoned to Rearden's office, Larkin appea three days later than the appointment made, offering no apolo He said, not looking at Rearden, his mouth drawn tightly into expression of rancorous dignity

"After all you can't order people to come running to your of time you please."

" arden spoke slowly and carefully "Why wasn t the ore de-
:d?"

won t take abuse, I simply won't take any abuse for something
ildn t help I can run a mine just as well as you ran it, every
s well, I did everything you did—I don t know why some-
: keeps going wrong unexpectedly all the time I can t be
ied for the unexpected "

'o whom did you ship your ore last month?'

intended to ship you your share of it I fully intended it, but I
dn't help it if we lost ten days of production last month on
unt of the rainstorm in the whole of north Minnesota—I in
ed to ship you the ore, so you can't blame me, because my in
on was completely honest."

f one of my blast furnaces goes down, will I be able to keep it
g by feeding your intention into it?"

Fhat s why nobody can deal with you or talk to you—because
're inhuman "

I have just learned that for the last three months you have not
a shipping your ore by the lake boats, you have been shipping
y rail Why?"

Well after all I have a right to run my business as I see fit."

Why are you willing to pay the extra cost?'

What do you care? I'm not charging it to you "

What will you do when you find that you can t afford the rail
:s and that you have destroyed the lake shipping?"

'I am sure you wouldn't understand any consideration other
n dollars and cents but some people do consider their social
l patriotic responsibilities "

'What responsibilities?"

'Well, I think that a railroad like Taggart Transcontinental is
ential to the national welfare and it is one s public duty to
pport Jim's Minnesota branch line which is running at a deficit"

Rearden leaned forward across the desk he was beginning to see
: links of a sequence he had never understood "To whom did
u ship your ore last month?" he asked evenly

"Well, after all that is my private business which—"

"To Orren Boyle wasn't it?"

"You can't expect people to sacrifice the entire steel industry of the
tion to your selfish interests and—"

"Get out of here " said Rearden He said it calmly The sequence
as clear to him now

"Don't misunderstand me, I didn t mean—"

"Get out."

Larkin got out

Then there followed the days and nights of searching a con
nent by phone by wire by plane—of looking at abandon-
mines and at mines ready to be abandoned—of tense rushed
erences held at tables in the unlighted corners of disrep
staurants Looking across the table Rearden had to decide
much he could risk to invest upon the sole evidence of a

face, manner and tone of voice, hating the state of having to hope for honesty as for a favor, but risking it, pouring money into unknown hands in exchange for unsupported promises into unsigned, unrecorded loans to dummy owners of failing mines—money handed and taken furtively, as an exchange between criminals, in anonymous cash, money poured into unenforceable contracts—both parties knowing that in case of fraud, the defrauded was to be punished, not the defrauder—but poured that a stream of ore might continue flowing into furnaces, that the furnaces might continue to pour a stream of white metal

"Mr Rearden," asked the purchasing manager of his mills, "if you keep that up where will be your profit?"

"We'll make it up on tonnage," said Rearden wearily "We have an unlimited market for Rearden Metal"

The purchasing manager was an elderly man with graying hair, a lean, dry face, and a heart which, people said, was given exclusively to the task of squeezing every last ounce of value out of a penny He stood in front of Rearden's desk, saying nothing else, merely looking straight at Rearden his cold eyes narrowed and grim It was a look of the most profound sympathy that Rearden had ever seen

There's no other course open, thought Rearden, as he had thought through days and nights He knew no weapons but to pay for what he wanted, to give value for value, to ask nothing of nature without trading his effort in return, to ask nothing of men without trading the product of his effort What were the weapons, he thought, if values were not a weapon any longer?

"An unlimited market, Mr Rearden?" the purchasing manager asked dryly

Rearden glanced up at him "I guess I'm not smart enough to make the sort of deals needed nowadays," he said, in answer to the unspoken thoughts that hung across his desk

[illegible] Rearden it' [illegible]

"You couldn't learn it and it wouldn't do you any good [illegible] wouldn't win in any of those deals Don't you understand? You're the one who's got something to be looted"

When he was left alone, Rearden felt a jolt of blinding anger, as it had come to him before, painful, single and sudden like an electric shock—the anger bursting out of the knowledge that one cannot deal with pure evil, with the naked, full-conscious evil that neither has nor seeks justification. But when he felt the wish to fight and kill in the rightful cause of self-defense—he saw the fat grinning face of Mayor Bascom and heard the drawling voice saying, " . you and the charming lady who is not your wife"

Then no rightful cause was left, and the pain of anger was turning into the shameful pain of submission He had no right to condemn anyone—he thought—to denounce anything to fight and joyously, claiming the sanction of virtue The broken promises

unconfessed desires, the betrayal, the deceit, the lies, the fraud
e was guilty of them all What form of corruption could he
rn? Degrees do not matter, he thought, one does not bargain
out inches of evil

looters, but the wrath and the fire were gone He would fight, but
y as one guilty wretch against the others He did not pronounce
words, but the pain was their equivalent, the ugly pain saying
o am I to cast the first stone?

He let his body fall across the desk. Dagny, he thought,
gny, if this is the price I have to pay, I'll pay it He was still
trader who knew no code except that of full payment for his
ures

It was late when he came home and hurried soundlessly up the

ew dimly that this was not the root of his hatred

He closed the door of his bedroom like a fugitive winning a mo-
nt's reprieve He moved cautiously, undressing for bed he wanted
sound to betray his presence to his family, he wanted no contact
th them, not even in their own minds

He had put on his pajamas and stopped to light a cigarette, when
door of his bedroom opened The only person who could prop-
y enter his room without knocking had never volunteered to
ter it, so he stared blankly for a moment before he was able to
lieve that it was Lillian who came in.

fully, "but I'll have to my name is Mrs Rearden." He could not
l whether it was sarcasm or a plea.

She entered and threw the door closed with a casual, imperious
sture, the gesture of an owner

"What is it, Lillian?" he asked quietly

— — — — — — — — — — — —? Do you mind if

ord— the politi-
tuation I just want to chatter like a woman about perfectly u—
mportant things"

'Go ahead"

'Henry, there s no better way to stop me, is there?" She had
ur of helpless, appealing sincerity "What can I say after th—
Suppose I wanted to tell you about the new novel which Bal—
Eubank is writing—he is dedicating it to me—would that inter—
you?'

"If it's the truth you want—not in the least"

She laughed 'And if it's not the truth that I want?"

"Then I wouldn t know what to say," he answered—and felt
rush of blood to his brain, tight as a slap, realizing suddenly
double infamy of a lie uttered in protestation of honesty, he h—
said it sincerely but it implied a boast to which he had no right—
longer "Why would you want it, if it's not the truth?" he ask—
"What for?"

"Now — people Y—
wouldn't
tion con.
another
doesn t like the one that exists"

"No,' he said slowly, 'I wouldn't understand it"

'It's really very simple If you tell a beautiful woman that she
beautiful, what have you given her? It's no more than a fact and
has cost you nothing But if you tell an ugly woman that she
beautiful, you offer her the great homage of corrupting the conc—
of beauty To love a woman for her virtues is meaningless S—
earned it it's a payment, not a gift But to love her for her vices
a real gift, unearned and undeserved To love her for her vices is
defile all virtue for her sake—and *that* is a real tribute of love,
cause you sacrifice your conscience, your reason, your integrity
your invaluable self-esteem"

He looked at her blankly It sounded like some sort of monstr—
corruption that precluded the possibility of wondering whether a—
one could mean it, he wondered only what was the point of utter—
it.

"What's love, darling if — — —
in the tone of a drawi—

selfishness of the —
than soil that immacul—
self of yours with a single spot of which you'd have to
ashamed"

He said slowly, his voice oddly strained and solemn, "I h—
never claimed to be immaculate"

he laughed "And what is it you're being right now? You're giving me an honest answer, aren't you?" She shrugged her naked

kept

king that I had a husband and I wanted to find out what he ed like."

he studied him as he stood across the room, the tall, straight, taut s of his body emphasized by the single color of the dark blue amas.

You're very attractive," she said "You look so much better— e last few months Younger Should I say happier? You look less e. Oh, I know you're rushed more than ever and you act like a mander in an air raid, but that's only the surface You're less e—inside."

He looked at her, astonished It was true, he had not known it, not admitted it to himself He wondered at her power of observation. She had seen little of him in these last few months He had entered ... He had ught ... other w he ... sitive a cha ... in he ever suspected her of experiencing.

"I was not aware of it," he said

"It's quite becoming dear—and astonishing, since you've been ving such a terribly difficult time"

He wondered whether this was intended as a question She paused, if waiting for an answer, but she did not press it and went on ly

"I know you're having all sorts of trouble at the mills—and then e political situation is getting to be ominous, isn't it? If they pass ose laws they're talking about, it will hit you pretty hard, won't "

"Yes. It will. But that is a subject which is of no interest to *you*, lian, is it?"

"Oh, but it is!" She raised her head and looked straight at him, ... before a look of ... to solve it. "It ... of any possible

He wondered, for the first time, whether her spite, her sarcasm, e cowardly manner of delivering insults under the protection of a ile, were not the ... he had always taken them to ... of despair, not a ... own pain, a de- ... plea—so that the ... ue, the hinted, the evasive in her manner, the thing begging to be derstood, was not the open malice, but the hidden love He ought of it, aghast. It made his guilt greater than he had ever ntemplated

"If we're talking politics, Henry, I had an amusing thought."

n mbs of y o r expen a st on on to a beggar? Do you mind if I

r orders m
ranscontinental deals no rails no bridges Not even the politica
ituation I just want to chatter like a woman about perfectly un
mportant things"

"Go ahead

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double infamy of a lie uttered in protestation of honesty he h
said it sincerely but it implied a boast to which he had no right a
longer Why would you want it if it s not the truth?" he ask
"What for?

"Now you see *that s* the cruelty of conscientious people Y
wouldn t understand it—would you?—if I answered that real de
tion consists of being willing to lie cheat and fake in order to ma
another person happy—to create for him the reality he wants, if
doesn t like the one that exists

No he said slowly I wouldn t understand it"

"It s really very simple If you tell a beautiful woman that she
beautiful what have you given her? It s no more than a fact and
has cost you nothing But if you tell an ugly woman that she
beautiful you offer her the great homage of corrupting the conc
of beauty To love a woman for her virtues is meaningless Sl
earned it it s a payment not a gift But to love her for her vice
a real gift unearned and undeserved To love her for her vices is
defile all virtue for her sake—and *that* is a real tribute of love
cause you sacrifice your conscience, your reason, your integrity
your invaluable self-esteem'

He looked at her blankly It sounded like some sort of monstr
corruption that precluded the possibility of wondering whether a
one could mean it he wondered only what was the point of utter
it

'What s love darl ng if it s not self sacrifice? she went on ligh
in the tone of a drawing room discussion What s self sacri
unless one sacrifices that which is one s most precious and most
portant? But I don t expect
Puritan like you That s t
You d let the whole world
self of yours with a sin
ashamed"

He said slowly his voice oddly strained and solemn "I h
never claimed to be immaculate"

He stood looking at her as if it took all of his effort to keep his es directed at her face, to keep seeing her, to endure the sight Vhat do you want?' he asked

"Darling, there are so many things you could guess by yourself, if u really wished to know what I want. For instance if you have en avoiding me so blatantly for months, wouldn't I want to know e reason?"

"I have been very busy"

She shrugged "A wife expects to be the first concern of her isband s existence I didn't know that when you swore to forsake l others, it didn't include blast furnaces'

She came closer and, with an amused smile that seemed to mock em both, she slipped her arms around him

It was the swift, instinctive, ferocious gesture of a young bride oom at the unrequested contact of a whore—the gesture with hich he tore her arms off his body and threw her aside

[illegible] of his own reaction

wilderment, with no

calculations she had

w, a voice of sincerity

she did not answer

"I m sorry . It s just that I'm very tired," he added his voice teless he was broken by the triple lie one part of which was a sloyalty he could not bear to face, it was not the disloyalty to llian

She gave a brief chuckle "Well, if that s the effect your work has you, I may come to approve of it Do forgive me I was merely ying to do my duty I thought that you were a sensualist who d ver rise above the instincts of an animal in the gutter I m not one those bitches who belong in it" She was snapping the words ily, absently, without thinking Her mind was on a question mark, cing over every possible answer

It was her last sentence that made him face her suddenly, face r simply, directly, not as one on the defensive any longer "Lillian, hat purpose do you live for?" he asked

"What a crude question! No enlightened person would ever ask

"Well, what is it that enlightened people do with their lives?"

"Perhaps they do not attempt to do anything *That* is their enlightenment."

"What do they do with their time?"

"They certainly don't spend it on manufacturing plumbing pipes"

"Tell me, why do you keep making those cracks? I know that you el contempt for the plumbing pipes You've made that clear long go Your contempt means nothing to me Why keep repeating it?"

He wondered why this hit her; he did not know in what manner at he knew that it did He wondered why he felt with ertainty that *that* had been the right thing to say

She asked her voice dry What s the purpose of the sudden questionnaire?

He answered simply I d like to know whether there s anything that you really want If there is I d like to give it to you if I can."

"You d like to *buy* it? That s all you know—*paying* for things. You get off easily don t you? No it s not as simple as that What I want is non material

What is it?

"You

How do you mean that Lill an? You don t mean it in the gutter sense"

No not in the gutter sense"

"How then?

She was at the door she turned she raised her head to look at him

would never want to leave him and he would never have the right to leave—the thought that he owed her at least the feeble recognition of sympathy of respect for a feeling he could neither understand nor return—the knowledge that he could summon nothing for her except contempt a strange total unreasoning contempt, impervious to

ug only the thought that he was willing bear anything—leaving h m in a state which was both tension and peace—because he lay in bed his face pressed to the pillow thinking of Dagny of her slender sensitive body stretched beside him trembling under the touch of his fingers He wished she were back in New York If she were he would have gone there now at once in the middle of the night.

* *

Eugene Lawson sat at his desk as if it were the control panel of bomber plane command ng a continent below But he forgot it at times and slouched down his muscles going slack inside his suit as if he were pout ng at the world His mouth was the one part of him which he could not pull tight at any time it was uncomfortably prominent in his lean face attracting the eyes of any listener when he spoke the movement ran through his lower lip twisting its moist flesh into extraneous contortions of its own

I am not ashamed of it" said Eugene Lawson Miss Taggart I want you to *know* that I am not ashamed of my past career as president of the Community National Bank of Madison"

"I haven t made any reference to shame sa d Dagny coldly

every

th that I

w

ntieth

C Co npany which—

"I shall be glad to answer any questions I have nothing to hide My conscience is clear If you thought that the subject was embar

. .

They were perfectly good men They were a perfectly sound risk—though of course, I am speaking in human terms not in the terms of cold cash, which you are accustomed to expect from bankers I granted them the loan for the purchase of that factory, because they needed the money If people needed money, that was enough for me Need was my standard, Miss Taggart Need, not greed My father and grandfather built up the Community National Bank just to amass a fortune for themselves I placed their fortune in the service of a higher ideal I did not sit on piles of money and demand collateral from poor people who needed loans The heart was my collateral Of course, I do not expect anyone in this materialistic country to understand me The rewards I got were not of a kind that people of *your* class, Miss Taggart, would appreciate The people who used to sit in front of my desk at the bank, did not sit as you do, Miss Taggart They were humble, uncertain, worn with care, afraid to speak My rewards were the tears of gratitude in their eyes, the trembling voices, the blessings, the woman who kissed my hand when I granted her a loan she had begged for in vain everywhere else "

"Will you please tell me the names of the men who owned the motor factory?

"That factory [illegible] I
wa
for

"Certainly I knew them all It was men that interested me, not machines I was concerned with the human side of industry, not the cash-register side "

She leaned eagerly across the desk "Did you know any of the engineers who worked there?"

"The engineers? No, no I was much more democratic than that. It's the real workers that interested me The common men They all knew me by sight I used to come into the shops and they would wave and shout, 'Hello, Gene ' That's what they called me—Gene But I'm sure this is of no interest to you It's past history Now if you really came to Washington in order to talk to me about your railroad"—he straightened up briskly the bomber plane pose returning—"I don't know whether I can promise you any special consideration, inasmuch as I must hold the national welfare above any private privileges or interests which—"

"I didn't come to talk to you about my railroad " she said looking at him in bewilderment. "I have no desire to talk to you about my railroad "

"No?" He sounded disappointed

"No I came for information about the motor factory Could possibly recall the names of of the engineers who worked th

I don t believe I ever inquired about their names I wasn't concerned with the parasites of office and laboratory I was concerned with the real workers—the men of calloused hands who keep a factory going They were my friends "

"Can you give me a few of their names? Any names of anyone who worked there?

My dear Miss Taggart it was so long ago, there were thousands of them how can I remember?"

"Can t you recall one any one?"

I certainly cannot So many people have always filled my life that I can t be expected to recall individual drops in the ocean."

Were you familiar with the production of that factory? With the kind of work they were doing—or planning?'

Certainly I took a personal interest in all my investments I went to inspect that factory very often They were doing exceedingly well They were accomplishing wonders The workers housing conditions were the best in the country I saw lace curtains at every window and flowers on the window sills Every home had a plot of ground for a garden They had built a new schoolhouse for the children"

Did you know anything about the work of the factory s research laboratory?

Yes yes they had a wonderful research laboratory very advanced very dynamic with forward vision and great plans"

Do you remember hearing anything about any plan to produce a new type of motor?"

... M ... the ... him ... prob

lems"

She turned away not to see the damp movements of his mouth

A chunk of stone wi ... on a pedestal ... a corner of the office— ... arms stood in a niche ... matical detail like the ... the wall

"Therefore if you re thinking of your railroad Miss Taggart as of course you are in view of certain possible developments— must point out to you that although the welfare of the country my first consideration to which I would not hesitate to sacrifi anyone s profits still I have never closed my ears to a plea f mercy and—"

She looked at him and understood what it was that he want from her what sort of motive kept him going

I don t wish to discuss my railroad' she said fighting to ke her voice monotonously flat while she wanted to scream in vulsion "Anything you have to say on the subject, you will ple say it to my brother Mr James Taggart

"I d think that at a time like this you wouldn t want to pass a rare opportunity to plead your case before—

"Have you preserved any records pertaining to the motor factory

: sat straight, her hands clasped tight together.

"What records? I believe I told you that I lost everything I owned en the bank collapsed" His body had gone slack once more, interest had vanished "But I do not mind it What I lost was re material wealth I am not the first man in history to suffer for ideal I was defeated by the selfish greed of those around me ouldn't establish a system of brotherhood and love in just one all state, amidst a nation of profit-seekers and dollar-grubbers was not my fault But I won't let them beat me I am not to be pped I am fighting—on a wider scale—for the privilege of serv- ; my fellow men Records, Miss Taggart? The record I left, when departed from Madison, is inscribed in the hearts of the poor, who d never had a chance before"

She did not want to utter a single unnecessary word, but she could t stop herself she kept seeing the figure of the old charwoman ubbing the steps "Have you seen that section of the country ice?" she asked

"It's not my fault!" he yelled "It's the fault of the rich who still d money, but wouldn't sacrifice it to save my bank and the peo- : of Wisconsin! You can't blame me! I lost everything!"

"Mr Lawson," she said with effort, "do you perhaps recall the me of the man who headed the corporation that owned the ctory? The corporation to which you lent the money It was called malgamated Service, wasn't it? Who was its president?"

"Oh, him? Yes, I remember him His name was Lee Hunsacker very worthwhile young man, who's taken a terrible beating"

"Where is he now? Do you know his address?"

"Why—I believe he's somewhere in Oregon. Grangeville, Ore- m. My secretary can give you his address But I don't see of what terest . . . Miss Taggart, if what you have in mind is to try to e Mr Wesley Mouch, let me tell you that Mr Mouch attaches a eat deal of weight to my opinion in matters affecting such issues railroads and other—"

"I have no desire to see Mr Mouch" she said rising

"But then, I can't understand What, really, was your pur se in coming here?"

"I am trying to find a certain man who used to work for the wentieth Century Motor Company"

"Why do you wish to find him?"

"I want him to work for my railroad"

He spread his arms wide, looking incredulous and slightly in gnant. "At such a moment, when crucial issues hang in the alance, you choose to waste your time on looking for some *one* mployee? Believe me, the fate of your railroad depends on Mr Iouch much more than on any employee you ever find

"Good day," she said.

She had [illegible] erky and high "You

[illegible] n."

[illegible] st all

nothing for myself I've never sought anything for myself Miss Ta gart I can proudly say that in all of my life I have *never* made profit!'

Her voice was quiet steady and solemn

"Mr Lawson I think I should let you know that of all the sta ments a man can make *that* is the one I consider most despicable

* *

"I never had a chance!" said Lee Hunsacker

He sat in the middle of the kitchen, at a table cluttered w papers He needed a shave his shirt needed laundering It was h to judge his age the swollen flesh of his face looked smooth a blank untouched by experience, the graying hair and filmy e looked worn by exhaustion he was forty two

Nobody ever gave me a chance I hope they re satisfied with wh they've made of me But don t think that I don't know it. I kno was cheated out of my birthright Don t let them put on any [illegible] of hypocrites"

[illegible]

among the bleak roofs and naked trees of a place that was country and could never quite become a town Dusk and dar ness seemed soaked into the walls of the kitchen A pile of bre fast dishes lay in the sink a pot of stew simmered on the sto emitting steam with the greasy odor of cheap meat a dusty ty writer stood among the papers on the table.

"The Twentieth Century Motor Company" said Lee Hunsac "was one of the most illustrious names in the history of Amer industry *I* was the president of that company I owned that fact But they wouldn t give me a chance

'You were not the president of the Twentieth Century Mo Company were you? I believe you headed a corporation ca

[illegible] r their factory [illegible] We were just [illegible] y? Nothing b

backwoods garage mechanic—did you know that that s how started?—without any background at all My family once belon to the New York Four Hundred My grandfather was a membe the national legislature It s not my fault that my father coul afford to give me a car of my own when he sent me to school All other boys had cars My family name was just as good as any theirs When I went to college—" He broke off abruptly "W newspaper did you say you re from?

She had given him her name she did not know why she now glad that he had not recognized it and why she preferred not to lighten him I did not say I was from a newspaper she answe "I need some information on that motor factory for a private e of my own not for publication"

"Oh" He looked disappointed He went on sullenly, as if she re guilty of a deliberate offense against him "I thought maybe you me for an advance interview because I m writing my autobiog-phy" He pointed to the papers on the table 'And what I intend to l is plenty I intend—Oh, hell!' he said suddenly, remembering nething

He rushed to the stove, lifted the lid off the pot and went through motions of stirring the stew, hatefully, paying no attention to his rformance He flung the wet spoon down on the stove, letting grease drip into the gas burners, and came back to the table

"Yeah, I'll write my autobiography *if* anybody ever gives me a ance," he said "How can I concentrate on serious work when this the sort of thing I have to do?" He jerked his head at the stove riends huh! Those people think that just because they took me in, ey can exploit me like a Chinese coolie! Just because I had no her place to go, They have it easy, those good old friends of mine never lifts a finger around the house, just sits in his store all day, lousy little two-bit stationery store—can it compare in importance th the book I m writing? And she goes out shopping and asks me watch her damn stew for her She knows that a writer needs ace and concentration, but does she care about that? Do you ow what she did today?" He leaned confidentially across the table inting at the dishes in the sink. "She went to the market and left l the breakfast dishes there and said she d do them later I know hat she wanted She expected me to do them Well, I'll fool her l leave them just where they are"

"Would you allow me to ask you a few questions about the motor ctory?"

"Don t imagine that that motor factory was the only thing in my fe. I'd held many important positions before I was prominently nnected, at various times, with enterprises manufacturing surgical pliances, paper containers, men's hats and vacuum cleaners Of urse, that sort of stuff didn't give me much scope But the motor ctory—*that* was my big chance That was what I d been waiting r"

"How did you happen to acquire it?"

[illegible] The factory

[illegible]

e scraped up a little money But we didn t have enough [illegible] eeded a loan to help us out and give us a start. It was a perfectly afe bet, we were young men embarking on great careers full of agerness and hope for the future But do you think anybody [illegible] s any encouragement? They did not. Not those greedy,

nothing for myself I've never sought anything for myself Miss Tag-
gart I can proudly say that in all of my life I have *never* made a
profit!'

Her voice was quiet, steady and solemn

Mr Lawson I think I should let you know that of all the state-
ments a man can make *that* is the one I consider most despicable"

* *

"I never had a chance!' said Lee Hunsacker

He sat in the middle of the kitchen, at a table cluttered wi
papers He needed a shave his shirt needed laundering It was ha
to judge his age the swollen flesh of his face looked smooth an
blank untouched by experience the graying hair and filmy ey
looked worn by exhaustion he was forty two

Nobody ever gave me a chance I hope they're satisfied with wh
they've made of me But don t think that I don't know it. I know
was cheated out of my birthright. Don't let them put on any a
... of hypocrites."

rds at hea
k at it!" E

Beyond the window the light of noon looked like grayish da
among the bleak roofs and naked trees of a place that was r
country and could never quite become a town Dusk and dar
ness seemed soaked into the walls of the kitchen A pile of brea
fast dishes lay in the sink, a pot of stew simmered on the sto
emitting steam with the greasy odor of cheap meat, a dusty ty
writer stood among the papers on the table.

"The Twentieth Century Motor Company ' said Lee Hunsack
"was one of the most illustrious names in the history of Ameri
industry *I* was the president of that company I owned that facto
But they wouldn t give me a chance"

"You were not the president of the Twentieth Century Mo
Company were you? I believe you headed a corporation ca
Amalgamated Service?"

"Yes yes but it s the same thing We took over their factory
were going to do just as well as they did Better We were jus
important Who the hell was Jed Starnes anyway? Nothing bu
backwoods garage mechanic—did you know that that's how
started?—without any background at all My family once belon
to the New York Four Hundred My grandfather was a membe
the national legislature It s not my fault that my father coul
afford to give me a car of my own, when he sent me to school All
other boys had cars My family name was just as good as an
theirs When I went to college— He broke off abruptly "W
newspaper did you say you re from?

She had given him her name she did not know why she now
... not to

h." He looked disappointed. [illegible]
guilty of a deliberate offense [illegible]
for an advance interview [illegible]
y." He pointed to the papers on the table. [illegible]
is plenty. I intend—Oh, hell!" [illegible]
ething

He rushed to the stove, lifted the lid off the pot [illegible]
motions of stirring the stew, [illegible]
formance. He flung the wet spoon down on the stove, [illegible]
grease drip into the gas burners, [illegible]
"Yeah, I'll write my autobiography [illegible]
ance," he said. "How can I concentrate on [illegible]
the sort of thing I have to do?" [illegible]
friends, huh! Those people think [illegible]
ey can exploit me like a Chinese coolie [illegible]
her place to go. They have it easy, those good old friends [illegible]
e never lifts a finger around the house, [illegible]
lousy little two-bit stationery store—[illegible]
with the book I'm writing? And she goes out shopping [illegible]
o watch her damn stew for her. She knows that a writer [illegible]
peace and concentration, but does she care [illegible]

[illegible]

"Don't imagine that that motor factory was the only thing in my [illegible]

[illegible]

"How did you happen to acquire it?"

"It was meant for me. It was my dream come true. The factory was shut down [illegible] run it into [illegible] but there [illegible]pany went [illegible]ody wanted [illegible]eat factory, [illegible]s that had [illegible]p I wanted, [illegible] few friends [illegible]ether and we formed the Amalgamated Service Corporation and we scraped up a little money. But we didn't have enough. We needed a loan to help us out and give us a start. It was a perfectly safe bet, we were young men embarking on great careers, full of eagerness and hope for the future. But do you [illegible]anybody give us any encouragement? They did not. [illegible]entrenched

"Oh" He looked disappointed He went on sullenly, as if she were guilty of a deliberate offense against him "I thought maybe you came for an advance interview because I m writing my autobiography' He pointed to the papers on the table "And what I intend to tell is plenty I intend—Oh, hell!" he said suddenly, remembering something

[illegible]

they can exploit me like a Chinese coolie! Just because I had no other place to go The [illegible] those good old friends of m[illegible]

[illegible]

to watch her damn stew for her She knows that a writer needs peace and concentration, but does she care about that? Do you know what she did today?" He leaned confidentially across the table, pointing at the dishes in the sink. "She went to the market and left all the breakfast dishes there and said she d do them later I know what she wanted She expected me to do them Well, I'll fool her. I'll leave them just where they are"

"Would you allow me to ask you a few questions about the motor factory?"

"Don't imagine that that motor factory was the only thing in my life I'd held many important positions before I was prominently connected, at various times, with enterprises manufacturing surgical appliances, paper containers, men s hats and vacuum cleaners Of course, that sort of stuff didn't give me much scope But the motor factory—*that* was my big chance. That was what I d been waiting for"

"How did you happen to acquire it?"

"It was meant for me It was my dream come true The factory [illegible]

[illegible]

eagerness and hope for the future But do you think [illegible]
ts any encouragement? They did not. Not those greedy, [illegible]

vultures of privilege! How were we to succeed in life if nobody would give us a factory? We couldn't compete against the little snots who inherit whole chains of factories, could we? Weren't we entitled to the same break? Aw, don't let me hear anything about justice! I worked like a dog, trying to get somebody to lend us the money But that bastard Midas Mulligan put me through the wringer"

She sat up straight. "Midas Mulligan?"

"Yeah—the banker who looked like a truck driver and acted it, too!"

"Did you know Midas Mulligan?"

"Did I know him? I'm the only man who ever beat him—not that it did me any good!"

At odd moments, with a sudden sense of uneasiness, she had wondered—as she wondered about the stories of deserted ships found floating at sea or of sourceless lights flashing in the sky—about the disappearance of Midas Mulligan. There was no reason why she felt that she had to solve these riddles, except that they were mysteries which had no business being mysteries they could not be causeless yet no known cause could explain them.

Midas Mulligan had once been the richest and, consequently, the most denounced man in the country He had never taken a loss on any investment he made; everything he touched turned into gold "It's because I know what to touch," he said. Nobody could grasp the pattern of his investments he rejected deals that were considered flawlessly safe, and he put enormous amounts into ventures that no other banker would handle Through the years, he had been the trigger that had sent unexpected, spectacular bullets of industrial success shooting over the country It was he who had invested in Rearden Steel at its start, thus helping Rearden to complete the purchase of the abandoned steel mills in Pennsylvania When an economist referred to him once as an audacious gambler, Mulligan said, 'The reason why you'll never get rich is because you think that what I do is gambling"

It was rumored that one had to observe a certain unwritten rule when dealing with Midas Mulligan if an applicant for a loan ever mentioned his personal need or any personal feeling whatever, the interview ended and he was never given another chance to speak to Mr Mulligan

"Why yes, I can," said Midas Mulligan, when he was asked whether he could name a person more evil than the man with a heart closed to pity "The man who uses another's pity for him as a weapon"

[illegible] ...s on him [illegible] ...ewspaper [illegible] ...das Mulli[illegible] ...peared i[illegible] "Midas[illegible]

[illegible] petition was granted

In the eyes of his contemporaries, he was a man who had com- the one unforgivable sin he was proud of his wealth.

These were the things Dagny had heard about Midas Mulligan, she had never met him Seven years ago Midas Mulligan had vanished. He left his home one morning and was never heard from again On the next day, the depositors of the Mulligan Bank in Chicago received notices requesting that they withdraw their funds, because the bank was closing In the investigations that followed, it was learned that Mulligan had planned the closing in advance and in minute detail, his employees were merely carrying out his instructions It was the most orderly run on a bank that the country ever witnessed. Every depositor received his money down to the last fraction of interest due All of the bank s assets had been sold piecemeal to various financial institutions When the books were balanced, it was found that they balanced perfectly, to the penny, nothing was left over, the Mulligan Bank had been wiped out.

No clue was ever found to Mulligan's motive to his personal fate or to the many millions of his personal fortune The man and the fortun[illegible] No one had had [illegible]

[illegible] had no family, no friends His servants knew nothing he had left his home that morning as usual and did not come back, that was all

There was—Dagny had thought uneasily for years—a quality of the impossible about Mulligan s disappearance it was as if a New York skyscraper had vanished one night, leaving nothing behind but a vacant lot on a street corner A man like Mulligan and a fortune such as he had taken along with him could not stay hidden anywhere a skyscraper could not get lost it would be seen rising above any plain or forest chosen for its hiding place were it destroyed even its pile of rubble could not remain unnoticed But Mulligan had gone—and in the seven years since in the mass of rumors guesses, theories Sunday supplement stories and eyewitnesses who claimed to have seen him in every part of the world no clue to a plausible explanation had ever been discovered

Among the stories, there was one so preposterously out of character that Dagny believed it to be true nothing in Mulligan s nature could have given anyone ground to invent it It was said that the last person to see him on the spring morning of his disappearance was an old woman who sold flowers on a Chicago street corner by the Mulligan Bank She related that he stopped and bought a bunch of the year s first bluebells His face was the happiest face she had ever seen, he had the look of a youth starting out into a great, unobstructed vision of life lying open before him the marks of pain and tension the sediment of years upon a human face had been wiped off, and what remained was only joyous eagerness and peace He picked up the flowers as if on a sudden impulse and he winked at the old woman as if he had some shining joke to share with her He said, "Do you know how much

I've always loved it—being alive?' She stared at him, bewildered, and
bro
coa
buil
"
on
'M
whi
he
coll
when nobody had ever given me a chance at anything big? did he lend money to others but not to me? It was plain discrimination. H
record c
cart, le
if a lot of ignorant grocers refused to co-operate with me about the paper containers By what right did he pass judgment on my ability? Why did my plans for my own future have to depend upon the arbitrary opinion of a selfish monopolist? I wasn't going to stand for that I wasn't going to take it lying down I brought suit against him"

"You did *what?*"

"Oh yes, he said proudly, 'I brought suit. I'm sure it would seem strange in some of your hidebound Eastern states, but the state of Illinois had a very humane, very progressive law under which I could sue him I must say it was the first case of its kind ... way for us to c ... hat peo ple ... agains any person in any matter involving his livelihood ... was use to protect day laborers and such, but it applied to me and my partners as well, didn't it? So we went to court, and we testified about the bad breaks we'd all had in the past, and I quoted Mulligan saying that I couldn't even own a vegetable pushcart and we proved that all the members of the Amalgamated Service corporation had no prestige no credit no way to make a living—and therefore, the purchase of the motor factory was our only chance of livelihood—and, therefore, Midas Mulligan had no right to discriminate against us—and, therefore, we were entitled to demand a loan from him under the law Oh, we had a perfect case all right but the man who presided at the trial was Judge Narragansett, one of those old fashioned monks of the bench who thinks like a mathematician and never feels the human side of anything He just sat there all through the trial like a marble statue—like one of those blindfolded marble statues At the end, he instructed the jury to bring in a verdict in favor of Midas Mulligan—and he said some very harsh things about me and my partners But we appealed to a higher court—and the higher court reversed the verdict and ordered Mulligan to give us the loan on our terms He had thr... in which to comply, but before the three months were ...

something happened that nobody can figure out and he vanished into thin air he and his bank There wasn t an extra penny left of that bank to collect our lawful claim We wasted a lot of money on detectives trying to find him—as who didn t?—but we gave it up"

No—thought Dagny—no apart from the sickening feeling it gave her this case was not much worse than any of the other things that Midas Mulligan had borne for years He had taken many losses under laws of a similar justice under rules and edicts that had cost him much larger sums of money he had borne them and fought and worked the harder it was not likely that this case had broken him

"What happened to Judge Narragansett?" she asked involuntarily and wondered what subconscious connection had made her ask it She knew little about Judge Narragansett but she had heard and remembered his name because it was a name that belonged so exclusively to the North American continent Now she realized suddenly that she had heard nothing about him for years

"Oh, he retired" said Lee Hunsacker

"He did?" The question was almost a gasp

"Yeah."

"When?"

"Oh about six months later"

"What did he do after he retired?"

"I don t know I dont think anybody s heard from him s nce"

He wondered why she looked frightened Part of the fear she *felt*, was that she could not name its reason either "Please tell me about the motor factory" she said with effort.

"*Well* Eugene Lawson of the Community National Bank in Madison finally gave us a loan to buy the factory—but he was just a messy cheapskate he didn t have enough money to see us through he couldn't help us when we went bankrupt It was not our fault We had everything against us from the start How could we run a factory when we had no railroad? Weren t we entitled to a railroad? I tried to get them to reopen their branch line but those damn people at Taggart Trans—" He stopped "Say are you by any chance one of *those* Taggarts?"

"I am the Operating Vice President of Taggart Transcontinental"

For a moment, he stared at her in blank stupor she saw the struggle of fear obsequiousness and hatred in his filmy eyes The result was a sudden snarl "I don t need any of you big shots! Don't think I m going to be afraid of you Don't expect me to beg for a job I'm not asking favors of anybody I bet you re not used to hear people talk to you th s way are you?"

"Mr Hunsacker I will appreciate it very much if you will give me the information I need about the factory"

"You re a little late getting interested What s the matter? Your conscience bothering you? You people let Jed Starnes grow filthy rich on that factory but you wouldn't give us a break It was th same factory We did everything he did We started right m facturing the particular type of motor that had been his b

be forgiveness for a man who kills himself quietly Who judgment on another man s suffering and on the limit of wh bear? But the man who kills himself making a show of hi order to hurt somebody the man who gives his life for there s no forgiveness for him no excuse he s rotten clea and what he deserves is that people spit at his memory, feeling sorry for him and hurt as he wanted them to Well that was Eric Starnes I can tell you where to find two if you wish

She found Gerald Starnes in the ward of a flophouse He twisted on a cot His hair was still black but the white s his chin was like a mist of dead weeds over a vacant face soggy drunk A pointless chuckle kept breaking his vo he spoke the sound of a static unfocused malevolence

It went bust the great factory That s what happened t went up and bust Does that bother you, madame? The fa rotten Everybody is rotten I m supposed to beg somebo don but I won t I don t give a damn People get fits keep up the show when it s all rot, black rot the auto the buildings and the souls and it doesn t make any differe way or another You should've seen the kind of literati wh flip flops when I whistled when I had the dough. The pr the poets the intellectuals the world savers and the brothe Any way I whistled I had lots of fun I wanted to do g now I don t There isn t any good Not any goddamn goo whole goddamn universe I don t propose to take a bath if feel like it and that s that If you want to know anythin the factory ask my sister My sweet sister who had a tru they couldn t touch so she got out of it safe even if the hamburger class now not the filet mignon à la Sauce Bé but would she give a penny of it to her brother? The not that busted was her idea as much as mine but will she giv penny? Hah! Go take a look at the duchess take a look Wh care about the factory? It was just a pile of greasy machin sell you all my rights claims and title to it—for a drink. last of the Starnes name It used to be a great name— I ll sell it to you You think I m a stinking bum but that g all the rest of them and for rich ladies like you too I to do good for humanity Hah! I wish they d all boil in oil of fun. I wish they d choke What does it matter? What doe thing matter?"

On the next cot, a white haired, shriveled little tramp tur his sleep moaning [illegible]

[illegible] say that you re lying

The ill-smelling bungalow where she found Ivy Starnes sto the edge of town by the shore of the Mississippi Hanging s of moss and clots of waxy foliage made the thick vegetation lo if it were drooling the too many draperies hanging in the sta

air of a small room had the same look The smell came from
... at the feet

voice had the even dripping monotone of rain

"I can't answer the kind of questions you're asking, my girl The research laboratory? The engineers? Why should I remember anything about them? It was my father who was concerned with such matters not I My father was an evil man who cared for nothing but business He had no time for love only for money My brothers and I lived on a different plane Our aim was not to produce gadgets but to do good. We brought a great new plan into the factory It was eleven years ago We were defeated by the greed, the selfishness and the base animal nature of men It was the eternal conflict between spirit and matter between soul and body They would not renounce their bodies which was all we asked of them I do not remember any of those men. I do not care to remember The engineers? I believe it was they who started the hemophilia Yes that is what I said the hemophilia—the slow leak—the loss of blood that cannot be stopped They ran first. They deserted us one after another Our plan? We put into practice that noble historical precept From each according to his ability to each according to his need Everybody in the factory from charwomen to president received the same salary—the barest minimum necessary Twice a year we all gathered in a mass meeting where every person presented his claim for what he believed to be his needs We voted on every claim, and the will of the majority established every person's need and every person's ability The income of the factory was distributed accordingly Rewards were based on need, and penalties on ability Those whose needs were voted to be the greatest, received the most. Those who had not produced as much as the vote said they could were fined and had to pay the fines by working overtime without pay That was our plan It was based on the principle of selflessness It required men to be motivated not by personal gain but by love for their brothers"

Dagny heard a cold implacable voice saying somewhere within her Remember it—remember it well—it is not often that one can see pure evil—look at it—remember—and some day you'll find the words to name its essence She heard it through the screaming of other voices that cried in helpless violence It's nothing—I've heard it before—I'm hearing it everywhere—it's nothing but the same old tripe—why can't I stand it?—I can't stand it—I can't stand it!

"What's the matter with you my girl? Why did you jump up like that? Why are you shaking? What? Do speak louder I can't hear you How did the plan work out? I do not care to discuss it. Things became very ugly indeed and went fouler every year It has cost me my faith in human nature. In four

years a plan conceived not by the cold calculations of the mind, but by the pure love of the heart was brought to an end in the sordid mess of policemen lawyers and bankruptcy proceedings. But I have seen my error and I am free of it I am through with the world of machines manufacturers and money the world enslaved by matter I am learning the emancipation of the spirit, as revealed in the great secrets of India the release from bondage to flesh the victory over physical nature, the triumph of the spirit over matter

Through the blinding white glare of anger Dagny was seeing a long strip of concrete that had been a road with weeds rising from its cracks and the figure of a man contorted by a hand plow

But my girl I said that I do not remember But I do not know their names I do not know any names I do not know what sort of adventurers my father may have had in that laboratory! Don t you hear me? I am not accustomed to being questioned in such manner and Don't keep repeating it Don t you know any words but engineer ? Don t you hear me at all? Whats the matter with you? I—I don't like your face you re Leave me alone I don t know who you are I've never hurt you I m an old woman don t look at me like that, I

Stand back! Don't come near me or I'll c[illegible] for help! I'll

Oh yes yes I know that [illegible] head of the laboratory Y[illegible] William Hastings I reme[illegible] He quit the day after we introduced the plan He was the second man to quit us No No I don t remember who was the first He wasn t anybody important

* *

The woman who opened the door had graying hair and a poised distinguished look of grooming it took Dagny a few seconds to realize that her garment was only a simple cotton housedress

"May I see Mr William Hastings?" asked Dagny

[illegible] voice like a warning Her manner was courteous but she did not smile

It was a modest home in the suburbs of an industrial town. Bare tree branches cut across the bright cold blue of the sky on the top of the rise that led to the house The walls of the living room were silver gray sunlight hit the crystal stand of a lamp with white shade beyond an open door a breakfast nook was papered in red-dotted white

"Were you acquainted with my husband in business, Miss Taggart?"

"No I have never met Mr Hastings But I should like to speak to him on a matter of business of crucial importance"

"My husband died five years ago Miss Taggart."

Dagny closed her eyes; the dull, sinking shock contained the conclusions she did not have to make in words This, then, had been the man she was seeking, and Rearden had been right, this was why the motor had been left unclaimed on a junk pile

"I'm sorry," she said, both to Mrs Hastings and to herself

[illegible] ngs' face held sadness, [illegible] a grave look of firm [illegible]

"Mrs. Hastings, would you permit me to ask you a few questions?"

"Certainly Please sit down"

"Did you have some knowledge of your husband's scientific work?"

"Very little None, really. He never discussed it at home"

"He was, at one time, chief engineer of the Twentieth Century Motor Company?"

"Yes. He had been employed by them for eighteen years"

[illegible]

...m afraid I shall never learn it now I know why he left the factory was because of an outrageous scheme which the heirs of Jed Starnes established there He would not work on such terms or for such people. But there was something else I've always felt that something happened at Twentieth Century Motors, which he would not tell me"

"I'm extremely anxious to know any clue you may care to give me"

"I have no clue to it I've tried to guess and given up I cannot understand or explain it But I know that something happened. When my husband left Twentieth Century, we came here and he took a job as head of the engineering department of Acme Motors It was a growing successful concern at the time It gave my husband the kind of work he liked He was not a person prone to inner conflicts, he had always been sure of his actions and at peace with himself But for a whole year after we left Wisconsin he acted as if he were tortured by something, as if he were struggling with a personal problem he could not solve At the end of that year, he came to me one morning and told me that he had resigned from Acme Motors that he was retiring and would not work anywhere else He loved his work, it was his whole life Yet he looked calm, self-confident and happy for the first time since we'd come here He asked me not to question him about the reason of his decision. I didn't question him and I didn't object We had this house, we had our savings we had enough to live on modestly for the rest of our days I never learned his reason We went on living here, quietly and very happily He seemed to [illegible] profound contentment He had an odd serenity of spirit I [illegible] never seen in h[illegible] before There was nothing strange

havior or ac ivity—except that at times very rarely he went out without telling me where he went or whom he saw In the last two years of his life he went away for one month each summer he did not tell me where Otherwise he lived as he always had He studied a great deal and he spent his time on engineering research of his own working in the basement of our house I don't know what he did with his notes and experimental models I found no trace of them in the basement after his death He d ed five years ago of a heart ailment from which he had suffered for some time

Dagny asked hopelessly Did you know the nature of his experiments?

No I know very little about engineering"

"Did you know any of his professional friends or co-workers who might have been acquainted with his research?"

No When he was at Twentieth Century Motors he worked such long hours that we had very little time for ourselves and we spent it together We had no social life at all He never brought his associates to the house

When he was at Twentieth Century did he ever mention to you a motor he had designed an entirely new type of motor that could have changed the course of all industry?

"A motor? Yes Yes he spoke of it several times He said it was an invention of incalculable importance But it was not he who had designed it It was the invention of a young assistant of his"

She saw the expression on Dagny s face and added slowly quizzically without reproach merely in sad amusement "I see"

"Oh I m sorry! said Dagny realizing that her emotion had shot to her face and become a smile as obvious as a cry of relief

It s quite all right I understand It s the inventor of that motor that you re interested in I don t know whether he is still alive, but at least I have no reason to think that he isn t."

"I d give half my life to know that he is—and to find him. It as important as that Mrs Hastings Who is he?"

"I don t know I don t know his name or anything about him I never knew any of the men on my husbands staff He told me only that he had a young engineer who some day would up turn the world My husband did not care for anything in people except ability I think this was the only man he ever loved He d dn't say so but I could tell it just by the way he spoke of this young assistant I remember—the day he told me that the motor was completed—how his voice sounded when he said And he s only twenty-six This was about a month before the death of Jed Starnes He never ment oned the motor or the young engineer after that'

"You don t know what became of the young engineer?"

"No"

You can't suggest any way to find him?

No"

"You have no clue no lead to help me learn his name?"

"None Tell me was that motor extremely valuable?"

"More valuable than any estimate I could give you"

t's strange, because, you see, I thought of it once, some years
' we'd left Wisconsin, and I asked my husband what had be-
e of that invention he'd said was so great, what would be done
it. He looked at me very oddly and answered, 'Nothing'"
Why?"
He wouldn't tell me"
Can you remember anyone at all who worked at Twentieth
ury? Anyone who knew that young engineer? Any friend of

No, I . . Wait! Wait, I think I can give you a lead I can
you where to find one friend of his I don't even know that
d's name, either, but I know his address It's an odd story
better explain how it happened One evening—about two years
' we'd come here—my husband was going out and I needed our
that night, so he asked me to pick him up after dinner at the
aurant of the railroad station He did not tell me with whom
was having dinner. When I drove up to the station, I saw him
ding outside the restaurant with two men One of them was
ng and tall The other was elderly, he looked very distinguished
ould still recognize those men anywhere, they had the kind
aces one doesn't forget My husband saw me and left them
y walked away toward the station platform, there was a train
ing. My husband pointed after the young man and said, 'Did
see him? That's the boy I told you about' 'The one who's
great maker of motors?' 'The one who was'"
And he told you nothing else?"
Nothing else This was nine years ago Last spring I went to
t my brother who lives in Cheyenne. One afternoon, he took the
ily out for a long drive. We went up into pretty wild country,
h in the Rockies, and we stopped at a roadside diner There
a distinguished, gray haired man behind the counter I kept
ing at him while he fixed our sandwiches and coffee because
new that I had seen his face before, but could not remember
re. We drove on, we were miles away from the diner, when I
embered. You'd better go there It's on Route 86, in the
untains, west of Cheyenne, near a small industrial settlement by
Lennox Copper Foundry It seems strange, but I'm certain
it the cook in that diner is the man I saw at the railroad sta-
n with my husband's young idol."

* *

The diner stood on the summit of a long, hard climb Its glass
lls

Dagny sat at the end of the counter, eating a hamburger sand
ch. It was the best-cooked food she had ever tasted, the product
simple ingredients and of an unusual skill. Two workers
shing their dinner; she was waiting for them to depart
She studied the man behind the counter He was slender
ll, he had an air of distinction that belonged in an

castle or in the inner office of a bank, but his peculiar quality came from the fact that he made the distinction seem appropriate here, behind the counter of a diner He wore a cook's white jacket as if it were a full-dress suit. There was an expert competence in his manner of working, his movements were easy, intelligently economical He had a lean face and gray hair that blended in tone with the cold blue of his eyes, somewhere beyond his look of courteous sternness, there was a note of humor, so faint that it vanished if one tried to discern it

The two workers finished paid and departed, each leaving a dime for a tip She watched the man as he removed their dishes put the dimes into the pocket of his white jacket, wiped the counter working with swift precision Then he turned and looked at her It was an impersonal glance, not intended to invite conversation but she felt certain that he had long since noted her New York suit, her high heeled pumps her air of being a woman who did not waste her time his cold, observant eyes seemed to tell her that he knew she did not belong here and that he was waiting to discover her purpose

'How is business?' she asked

"Pretty bad They're going to close the Lennox Foundry next week so I'll have to close soon, too, and move on" His voice was clear, impersonally cordial

"Where to?

'I haven't decided"

'What sort of thing do you have in mind?'

"I don't know I'm thinking of opening a garage, if I can find the right spot in some town'

"Oh no! You're too good at your job to change it. You shouldn't want to be anything but a cook'

A strange, fine smile moved the curve of his mouth. "No?" he asked courteously

"No! How would you like a job in New York? He looked at her, astonished I'm serious I can give you a job on a big railroad, in charge of the dining-car department."

"May I ask why you should want to?"

She raised the hamburger sandwich in its white paper napkin. "There's one of the reasons '

"Thank you What are the others?'

"I don't suppose you've lived in a big city, or you'd know how miserably difficult it is to find any competent men for any job whatever"

"I know a little about that"

'Well? How about it, then? Would you like a job in New York at ten thousand dollars a year?"

"No"

She had been carried away by the joy of discovering and rewarding ability She looked at him silently, shocked "I don't think you understood me," she said

"I did"

"You're refusing an opportunity of this kind?"

"Yes"

lut why?"

hat is a personal matter"

Why should you work like this, when you can have a better
"

am not looking for a better job"

You don't want a chance to rise and make money?"

No Why do you insist?"

Because I hate to see ability being wasted!"

e said slowly, intently, "So do I"

omething in the way he said it made her feel the bond of some ound emotion which they held in common, it broke the dis- ne that forbade her ever to call for help "I m so sick of them!" voice startled her it was an involuntary cry "I m so hungry any sight of anyone who s able to do whatever it is he s doing!" he pressed the back of her hand to her eyes, trying to dam outbreak of a despair she had not permitted herself to acknowl e, she had not known the extent of it, nor how little of her urance the quest had left her

I m sorry," he said, his voice low It sounded, not as an apology, as a statement of compassion

he glanced up at him. He smiled, and she knew that the smile intended to break the bond which he, too, had felt the smile a trace of courteous mockery He said, "But I don't believe you came all the way from New York just to hunt for railroad ks in the Rockies."

No I came for something else" She leaned forward, both earms braced firmly against the counter, feeling calm and in it control again, sensing a dangerous adversary "Did you know, ut ten years ago, a young engineer who worked for the Twen- h Century Motor Company?"

he counted the seconds of a pause, she could not define the ure of the way he looked at her, except that it was the look of ie special attentiveness

Yes, I did," he answered

Could you give me his name and address?"

What for?"

It s crucially important that I find him"

That man? Of what importance is he?"

He is the most important man in the world."

Really? Why?"

Did you know anything about his work?"

Yes."

Did you know that he hit upon an idea of the most tremendous sequence?"

He let a moment pass. "May I ask who you are?"

Dagny Taggart. I m the Vice Pres—"

Yes, Miss Taggart I know who you are"

He said it with impersonal deference But he looked as if he d found the answer to some special question in his mind and t astonished any longer

"Then you know that my interest is not idle" she said. "I'm in a position to give him the chance he needs and I'm prepared to pay anything he asks"

"May I ask what has aroused your interest in him?"

His motor

"How did you happen to know about his motor?"

"I found a broken remnant of it in the ruins of the Twentieth Century factory Not enough to reconstruct it or to learn how it worked But enough to know that it did work and that it's an i
v
c
l
n
p... ...e ... the right now nothing is of any importance, except that I must find him Don't ask me how I happened to come to you You're the end of the trail Tell me his name"

He had listened without moving looking straight at her the attentiveness of his eyes seemed to take hold of every word and store it carefully away giving her no clue to his purpose He did not move for a long time Then he said "Give it up Miss Taggart You won't find him

"What is his name?"

"I can tell you nothing about him."

"Is he still alive?

"I can tell you nothing"

'What is *your* name?

"Hugh Akston"

Through the blank seconds of recapturing her mind she k... telling herself You're hysterical don't be preposterous it's just a coincidence of names—while she knew in certainty a numb inexplicable terror that this was *the* Hugh Akston.

Hugh Akston? she stammered "The philosopher? The last of the advocates of reason?"

"Why yes" he answered pleasantly "Or the first of their return

He did not seem startled by her shock, but he seemed to find it unnecessary His manner was simple almost friendly as if he felt no need to hide his identity and no resentment at its being discovered

"I didn't think that any young person would recognize my name or attach any significance to it nowadays" he said

"But but what are you doing here? Her arm swept at the room "This doesn't make sense!"

"Are you sure?"

"What is it? A stunt? An experiment? A secret mission? Are you studying something for some special purpose?

"No Miss Taggart I'm earning my living The words and the voice had the genuine simplicity of truth

"Dr Akston I it's inconceivable it's You're you're a philosopher the greatest philosopher living immortal name why would *you* do *this?*"

"Because I am a philosopher Miss Taggart"
She knew with certainty—even though she felt as if her capacity for certainty and for understanding were gone—that she would obtain no help from him that questions were useless that he would give her no explanation neither of the inventor's fate nor of his own.

"Give it up Miss Taggart" he said quietly as if giving proof that he could guess her thoughts as she had known he would "It is a hopeless quest the more hopeless because you have no inkling of what an impossible task you have chosen to undertake I would like to spare you the strain of trying to devise some argument trick or plea that would make me give you the information you are seeking Take my word for it it can't be done You said I'm the end of your trail Its a blind alley Miss Taggart Do not attempt to waste your money and effort on other more conventional methods of inquiry do not hire detectives They will learn nothing You may choose to ignore my warning but I think that you are a person of high intelligence able to know that I know what I am saying Give it up The secret you are trying to solve involves something greater—much greater—than the invention of a motor run by atmospheric electricity There is only one helpful suggestion that I can give you By the essence and nature of existence contradictions cannot exist. If you find it inconceivable that an invention of genius should be abandoned among ruins and that a philosopher should wish to work as a cook in a diner—check your premises You will find that one of them is wrong"

She started she remembered that she had heard this before and that it was Francisco who had said it And then she remembered that this man had been one of Francisco's teachers

"As you wish Dr Akston" she said "I won't attempt to question you about it But would you permit me to ask you a question on an entirely different subject?"

"Certainly"

"Dr Robert Stadler once told me that when you were at the Patrick Henry University you had three students who were your favorites and his three brilliant minds from whom you expected a great future One of them was Francisco d'Anconia"

"Yes Another was Ragnar Danneskjold"

"Incidentally—this is not my question—who was the third?"

"His name would mean nothing to you He is not famous"

"Dr Stadler said that you and he were rivals over these three students because you both regarded them as your sons"

"Rivals? *He* lost them"

"Tell me are you proud of the way these three have turned out?"

He looked off into the distance at the dying fire of the sunset on the farthest rocks his face had the look of a father who watches his sons bleeding on a battlefield He answered

"More proud than I had ever hoped to be"

It was almost dark He turned sharply took a package of cigarettes from his pocket pulled out one cigarette but stopped, remembering her presence as if he had forgotten it for a moment,

and extended the package to her She took a cigarette and he struck the brief flare of a match then shook it out, leaving only two small points of fire in the darkness of a glass room and of miles of mountains beyond it

She rose paid her bill and said, "Thank you, Dr Akston. I will not molest you with tricks or pleas I will not hire detectives But i think I should tell you that I will not give up I must find the inventor of that motor I will find him"

Not until the day when he chooses to find *you*—as he will"

When she walked to her car, he switched on the lights in the diner she saw the mailbox by the side of the road and noted the incredible fact that the name "Hugh Akston" stood written openly across it

She had driven far down the winding road, and the lights of the diner were long since out of sight, when she noticed that she was enjoying the taste of the cigarette he had given her it was different from any she had ever smoked before She held the small remnant to the light of the dashboard, looking for the name of the brand There was no name, only a trademark Stamped in gold on the thin, white paper there stood the sign of the dollar

She examined it curiously she had never heard of that brand before Then she remembered the old man at the cigar stand of the Taggart Terminal and smiled thinking that this was a specimen for his collection She stamped out the fire and dropped the butt into her handbag

Train Number 57 was lined along the track, ready to leave for Wyatt Junction, when she reached Cheyenne, left her car at the garage where she had rented it, and walked out on the platform of the Taggart station She had half an hour to wait for the east bound main liner to New York She walked to the end of the plat form and leaned wearily against a lamppost, she did not want to be seen and recognized by the station employees, she did not want to talk to anyone she needed rest A few people stood in clusters on the half-deserted platform, animated conversations seemed to be going on and newspapers were more prominently in evidence than usual

She looked at the lighted windows of Train Number 57—for a moment s relief in the sight of a victorious achievement Train Num ber 57 was about to start down the track of the John Galt Line through the towns through the curves of the mountains, past the green signals where people had stood cheering and the valleys where rockets had risen to the summer sky Twisted remnants of leave now hung on the branches beyond the train s roof line, and th passengers wore furs and mufflers as they climbed aboard The moved with the casual manner of a daily event, with the securit of expecting a performance long since taken for granted . . . We'v done it—she thought—this much, at least, is done

It was the chance conversation of two men somewhere behin her that came beating suddenly against her closed attention.

"But laws shouldn t be passed that way, so quickly"

"They re not laws, they re directives"

hen it's illegal"
's not illegal, because the Legislature passed a law last month
g him the power to issue directives"
don't think directives should be sprung on people that way,
f the blue, like a punch in the nose"
/ell, there's no time to palaver when it's a national emergency"
ut I don't think it's right and it doesn't jibe How is Rearden
g to do it, when it says here—"
... He can

d a copy

... ich, Top Co-ordinator of the
... tional Resources ' in a sur
... name of the national emer-
... had issued a set of directives, which were strung in a
mn down the page
he railroads of the country were ordered to reduce the maximum

... steel mills of the country were ordered to limit the maxi-
m production of any metal alloy to an amount equal to the

... compensate the railroads of the country for the extra costs
volved ... a moratorium

... provide the funds for the personnel to enforce these ...
special tax was imposed on the state of Colorado "as the state best
le to assist the needier states to bear the brunt of the national
ergency," such tax to consist of five per cent of the gross sales of
olorado's industrial concerns
The cry she uttered was one she had never permitted herself be-
re, because she made it her pride always to answer it herself—but
he saw ... ot see that he
... was the plea

The bum grinned mirthlessly and shrugged
"Who is John Galt?"
It was not Taggart Transcontinental that stood as the focus
error in her mind, it was not the thought of Hank Rearden ...

a rack pulled in opposite directions—it was Ellis Wyatt Wiping ou the rest, filling her consciousness, leaving no room for words time for wonder

when he flung a glass to shatter against the wall

The only consciousness the pictures left her was the feeling o the approach of some unthinkable disaster, and the feeling that sh had to outrun it. She had to reach Ellis Wyatt and stop him Sh did not know what it was that she had to prevent She knew onl that she had to stop him

And because, were she lying crushed under the ruins of a build ing, were she torn by the bomb of an air raid, so long as she wa still in existence she would know that action is man's foremo obligation, regardless of anything he feels—she was able to ru down the platform and to see the face of the stationmaster whe

She stood, propped up by the walls of the booth, her eyes close and listened to the dead whirl of metal which was the sound of bell ringing somewhere It brought no answer The bell kept comin in sudden spasms, like a drill going through her ear, through he body She clutched the receiver as if, unheeded, it were still a forn of contact She wished the bell were louder. She forgot that th sound she heard was not the She did no know that she was scre heard the cold, repro does not answer"

She sat at the window of a coach of Train Number 57, an listened to the clicking of the Rearden Met She sat, unrest he blac luster of the w it to se It was her sec d not think of the first

The bondholders, she thought, the bondholders of the John Ga Line—it was to her honor that they had entrusted their money, th saving and achievement of years, it was on her ability that they ha staked it, it was on her work that they had relied and on their own and she had been made to betray them into a looters' trap the would be no trains and no life-blood of freight, the John Galt Line ha been only a drainpipe that had permitted Jim Taggart to make deal and to drain their wealth, unearned, into his pocket, in e change for letting others drain his railroad—the bonds of the Jo Galt Line, which, this morning, had been the proud guardians their owners' security and future, had become in the space of hour, scraps of paper that no one would buy, with no value, future, no power, save the power to close the doors and stop th

:ls of the last hope of the country—and Taggart Transcon ntal was not a living plant fed by blood it had worked to pro- but a cannibal of the moment, devouring the unborn children reatness

ie tax on Colorado she thought, the tax collected from Ellis tt to pay for the livelihood of those whose job was to tie him make him unable to live, those who would stand on guard to see he got no trains, no tank cars no pipeline of Rearden Metal—Wyatt, stripped of the right of self-defense left without voice, out weapons, and worse made to be the tool of his own ruction, the supporter of his own destroyers the provider of food and of their weapons—Ellis Wyatt being choked with his bright energy turned against him as the noose—Ellis Wyatt had wanted to tap an unlimited source of shale oil and who e of a Second Renaissance. . .

ie sat bent over her head on her arms, slumped at the ledge of window—while the great curves of the green blue rail the ntains the valleys, the new towns of Colorado went by in the ness, unseen.

he sudden jolt of brakes on wheels threw her upright It was an hed [illegible]

[illegible]

ping the platform.

the instant before she saw it and her scream cut the voices of crowd, she knew that she had known that which she was to see break between mountains, lighting the sky throwing a glow swayed on the roofs and walls of the station the hill of Wyatt was a solid sheet of flame

fter, when they told her that Ellis Wyatt had vanished leaving ing behind but a board he had nailed to a post at the foot of the when she looked at his handwriting on the board she felt as if had almost known that these would be the words

am leaving it as I found it Take over It s yours "

Part 2

EITHER-OR

Chapter I THE MAN WHO BELONGED ON EARTH

Dr Robert Stadler paced his office, wishing he would not feel the cold

Spring had been late in coming Beyond the window, the dead gray of the hills looked like the smeared transition from the soiled white of the sky to the leaden black of the river Once in a while a distant patch of hillside flared into a silver yellow that was almost green, then vanished The clouds kept cracking for the width of a single sunray, then oozing closed again It was not cold in the office, thought Dr Stadler, it was that view that froze the place

It was not cold today, the chill was in his bones—he thought—the stored accumulation of the winter months, when he had had to be distracted from his work by an awareness of such a matter as inadequate heating and people had talked about conserving fuel It was preposterous, he thought, this growing intrusion of the accidents of nature into the affairs of men it had never mattered before, if a winter happened to be unusually severe, if a flood washed out a section of railroad track, one did not spend two weeks eating canned vegetables, if an electric storm struck some power station, an establishment such as the State Science Institute was not left without electricity for five days Five days of stillness this winter, he thought, with the great laboratory motors stopped and irretrievable hours wiped out, when his staff had been working on problems that involved the heart of the [illegible] m the wu [illegible] want to [illegible]

Fe [illegible] Dr [illegible] was late—an astonishing matter—late for an appointment with *him*—Dr Floyd Ferris the valet of science who had always faced him in a manner that suggested an apology for having but one hat to take off

This was outrageous weather for the month of May he thought looking down at the river, it was certainly the weather that made him feel as he did, not the book. He had placed the book in plain view on his desk, when he had noted that his reluctance to see it was more than mere revulsion, that it contained the el[illegible] emotion never to be admitted He told himself that he ha[illegible] his desk, not because the book lay there, but merely [illegible]

wanted to move feeling cold He paced the room trapped betwee
the desk and the window He would throw that book in the ash ca
where it belonged he thought, just as soon as he had spoken to Dr
Ferris

He watched the patch of green and sunlight on the distant hil
the promise of spring in a world that looked as if no grass or bu
would ever function again He smiled eagerly—and when the patc
vanished he felt a stab of humiliation at his own eagerness a
... ded h m of tha

a collection of sentences that gave him exorbitant praise and garuk
every thought he had expressed Closing the magazine he had fe
what he was feeling now at the desertion of a sunray

All right—he thought turning away from the window—he woul
concede that attacks of loneliness had begun to strike him at time
but it was a loneliness to which he was entitled it was hunger f
the response of some living, thinking mind He was so tired of a
those people he thought in contemptuous bitterness he dealt wi
cosmic rays while they were unable to deal with an electric ston

He felt the sudden contraction of his mouth like a slap denyn
him the right to pursue this course of thought He was looking at t
book on his desk Its glossy jacket was glaring and new it had be
published two weeks ago But I had nothing to do with it!—
screamed to himself the scream seemed wasted on a mercile
silence nothing answered it no echo of forgiveness The title
the book s jacket was *Why Do You Think You Think?*

There was no sound in that courtroom silence within him
pity no voice of defense—nothing but the paragraphs which
great memory had reprinted on his brain

"Thought is a primitive superstition Reason is an irrational id
The childish notion that we are able to think has been mankin
costliest error

What you think you think is an illusion created by your glan
your emotions and in the last analysis by the content of yo
stomach "

"That gray matter you re so proud of is like a mirror in an amu
ment park which transmits to you nothing but distorted signals fr
a reality forever beyond your grasp '

'The more certain you feel of your rational conclusions the m
certain you are to be wrong Your brain being an instrument
distortion the more active the brain the greater the distortion "

'The giants of the intellect whom you admire so much o
taught you that the earth was flat and that the atom was the small
particle of matter ...
ploded fallac

"The more

"Only the

notion that seeing is believing That which you see is the first thing disbelieve"

"A ... ...

ce of actual reality"

"The latest scientific discoveries—such as the tremendous achievements of Dr Robert Stadler—have demonstrated conclusively that our reason is incapable of dealing with the nature of the universe These discoveries have led scientists to contradictions which are impossible, according to the human mind, but which exist in reality nonetheless If you have not yet heard it, my dear old fashioned friends, it has now been proved that the rational is the insane"

"Do not expect consistency Everything is a contradiction of everything else Nothing exists but contradictions"

"Do not look for 'common sense' To demand 'sense' is the hallmark of nonsense Natures does not make sense Nothing makes sense The ...

"Let us break the chains of the prejudice called Logic Are we going to be stopped by a syllogism?"

"So you think you're sure of your opinions? You cannot be sure of anything Are you going to endanger the harmony of your community, your fellowship with your neighbors, your standing reputation, good name and financial security—for the sake of an illusion? For the sake of the mirage of thinking that you think? Are you going to run risks and court disasters—at a precarious time like ours—by opposing the existing social order in the name of those imaginary notions of yours which you call your convictions? You say that you're sure you're right? Nobody is right, or ever can be You feel that the world around you is wrong? You have no means to know it. Everything is wrong in human eyes—so why fight it? Don't argue Accept. Adjust yourself Obey"

The book was written by Dr Floyd Ferris and published by the State Science Institute

"I had nothing to do with it!" said Dr Robert Stadler He stood still by the side of his desk, with the uncomfortable feeling of having missed some beat of time of not knowing how long the preceding moment had lasted He had pronounced the words aloud in a tone of rancorous sarcasm directed at whoever had made him say it.

He shrugged Resting on the belief that self mockery is an act of virtue, the shrug was the emotional equivalent of the sentence You're Robert Stadler, don't act like a high-school neurotic He sat down at his desk and pushed the book aside with the back hand.

Dr Floyd Ferris arrived half an hour late "Sorry," he my car broke down ... the way from Washington

a hell of a time trying to find somebody to fix it—there s getting be so damn few cars out on the road that half the service stati are closed

There was more annoyance than apology in his voice He sat do without waiting for an invitation to do so

Dr Floyd Ferris would not have been noticed as particul handsome in any other profession but in the one he had chosen was always described as that good looking scientist" He was feet tall and forty five years old but he managed to look taller younger He had an air of immaculate grooming and a ballet grace of motion but his clothes were severe, his suits being usu black or midnight blue He had a finely traced mustache and smooth black hair made the Institute boys say that he used the s shoe polish on both ends of him He did not mind repeating in tone of a joke on himself that a movie producer once said he w cast him for the part of a titled European gigolo He had begun career as a biologist but that was forgotten long ago he was fan as the Top Co ordinator of the State Science Institute

Dr Stadler glanced at him with astonishment—the lack apology was unprecedented—and said dryly, It seems to me you are spending a great deal of your time in Washington"

But Dr Stadler wasn t it you who once paid me the com ment of calling me the watchdog of this Institute? said Dr F pleasantly Isn t that my most essential duty?"

"A few of your duties seem to be accumulating right around place Before I forget it would you mind telling me what s goin here about that oil shortage mess?

He could not understand why Dr Ferris' face tightened int injured look You will permit me to say that this is unexpected unwarranted said Dr Ferris in that tone of formality v conceals pain and reveals martyrdom None of the authoritie volved have found cause for criticism We have just submitt detailed report on the progress of the work to date to the Bure Economic Planning and National Resources and Mr Wesley M has expressed himself as satisfied We have done our best on project We have heard no one else describe it as a mess sidering the difficulties of the terrain the hazards of the fire the fact that it has been only six month since we—

What are you talking about? asked Dr Stadler

"The Wyatt Reclamation Project Isn t that what you asked

"No said Dr Stadler no I Wait a moment Let m this straight I seem to recall something about this Institute t charge of a reclamation project What is it that you re reclaimin

Oil" said Dr Ferris "The Wyatt oil fields

'That was a fire wasn t it? In Colorado? That was w moment that was the man who set fire to his own oil wel

I m inclined to believe that that s a rumor created by public teria" said Dr Ferris dryly "A rumor with some undesirable patriotic implications I wouldn t put too much faith in those paper stories Personally I believe that it was an accident and Ellis Wyatt perished in the fire"

'ell, who owns those fields now?"
'obody—at the moment. There being no will or heirs, the
measure
return

kely as-
ignment as oil pumping?"

ew and larger appropriation Mr Wesley Mouch is pleased with
ur work So are Mr Balch of the Emergency Commission, Mr
inderson of Crucial Supplies and Mr Pettibone of Consumers'
rotection. I do not see what more could be expected of us The
roject is fully successful"
"Have you produced any oil?"
"No, but we have succeeded in forcing a flow from one of the
'ells, to the extent of six and a half gallons This of course, is
erely of experimental significance, but you must take into con-
mend three full months just to
totally—ex-
att ever had,
eal with the
isfigured wreckage of an act of vicious, anti-social sabotage which
. I mean to say, it is a difficult problem, but there is no doubt
hat we will be able to solve it"

ciently."
"Oh, is that what you had in mind, Dr Stadler? Oh, but I am so
orry!" The words came with a bright smile of relief on Dr Ferris'
ace, his solicitous manner returned "Do you mean that the tem

ne? Please accept
ed that you will
lever be ... again The only excuse I can offer for our

isis."

Why? For heaven s sake don t tell me that those Wyatt field were the only source of oil in the country!"

but Andrew Stockton retired quite unexpectedly, and now we ha to wait till his nephew reopens the plant"

I see Well I trust that you will take care of it among all yo other activities Dr Stadler shrugged with annoyance It is t coming a little ridiculous—the number of technological ventu that an institution of science has to handle for the government."

But Dr Stadler—

I know I know it can t be avoided By the way what is Proj X?

Dr Ferris eyes shot to him swiftly—an odd bright glance alertness that seemed startled but not frightened Where did y hear about Project X Dr Stadler?

Oh I heard a couple of your younger boys saying someth about it with an air of mystery you d expect from amateur tectives They told me it was something very secret"

That s right Dr Stadler It is an extremely secret research pro which the government has entrusted to us And it is of utm importance that the newspapers get no word about it"

What s the X?

Xylophone Project Xylophone That is a code name of cou The work has to do with sound But I am sure that it would interest you It is a purely technological undertaking

"Yes do spare me the story I have no time for your tech logical undertakings"

"May I suggest that it would be advisable to refrain from m tioning the words Project X to anyone Dr Stadler?"

"Oh all right all right I must say I do not enjoy discuss of that kind"

"But of course! And I wouldn t forgive myself if I allowed y time to be taken up by such concerns Please feel certain that may safely leave it to me" He made a movement to rise "No this was the reason you wanted to see me please believe that I

"No" said Dr Stadler slowly "This was not the reason I wa to see you"

Dr Ferris volunteered no questions, no eager offers of service remained seated merely waiting

ir Stadler reached over and made the book slide from the ier to the center of his desk, with a contemptuous flick of one d. "Will you tell me, please," he asked, "what is this piece of cency?"

sold twenty thousand copies in two weeks

I have read it."

And?"

I expect an explanation"

Do you realize what The style alone the of this nature!

n of presentation?' The voice was so innocently smooth that Dr dler could not decide whether this was mockery

Do you realize what you're preaching in this book?"

Since you do not seem to approve of it Dr Stadler I d rather

ued by it.

If a drunken lout could find the power to express himself on er," said Dr Stadler, "if he could give voice to his essence—eternal savage, leering his hatred of the mind—this is the sort book I would expect him to write But to see it come from a entist, under the imprint of this Institute!"

'But, Dr Stadler, this book was not intended to be read by scien s It was written for that drunken lout"

'What do you mean?"

'For the general public"

'But, good God! The feeblest imbecile should be able to see the ring contradictions in every one of your statements."

'Let us put it this way, Dr Stadler the man who doesn't see t, deserves to believe all my statements"

'But you've given the prestige of science to that unspeakable ff! It was all right for a disreputable mediocrity like Simon tchett to drool it as some sort of woozy mysticism—nobody ened to him. But you've made them think it s science *Science!* u've taken the achievements of the mind to destroy the mind By at right did you use *my* work to make an unwarranted pre-sterous switch into another field, pull an inapplicable metaphor d draw a monstrous generalization out of what is merely a athematical problem? By what right did you make it sound as if I —gave my sanction to that book?"

Dr Ferris did nothing he merely looked at Dr Stadler calmly; t the calm gave him an air that was almost patronizing "Now,

you see Dr Stadler, you re speaking as if this book were addresse to a thinking audience If it were one would have to be con cerned with such matters as accuracy, validity, logic and the prestig of science But it isn t Its addressed to the public. And you hav always been first to believe that the public does not think." H paused but Dr Stadler said nothing "This book may have n philosophical value whatever, but it has a great psychological value.

Just what is that?

You see Dr Stadler people don t want to think And the deepe they get into trouble the less they want to think. But by some so of instinct they feel that they ought to and it makes them fe guilty So they'll bless and follow anyone who gives them a just fication for not thinking Anyone who makes a virtue—a highl intellectual virtue—out of what they know to be their sin the weakness and their guilt"

And you propose to pander to that?"

'That is the road to popularity'

Why should you seek popularity?"

Dr Ferris eyes moved casually to Dr Stadler s face as if b pure accident "We are a public institution" he answered evenly supported by public funds"

So you tell people that science is a futile fraud which ought t be abolished!"

'That is a conclusion which could be drawn in logic from m book But that is not the conclusion they will draw"

"And what about the disgrace to the Institute in the eyes of th men of intelligence wherever such may be left?'

"Why should we worry about them?

Dr Stadler could have regarded the sentence as conceivable ha it been uttered with hatred, envy or malice but the absence of an such emotion the casual ease of the voice, an ease suggesting a chuckle hit him like a moment s glimpse of a realm that could no be taken as part of reality, the thing spreading down to his stomacl was cold terror

Did you observe the reactions to my book, Dr Stadler? It wa received with considerable favor"

"Yes—and *that* is what I find impossible to believe" He had to speak he had to speak as if this were a civilized discussion, he could not allow himself time to know what it was he had felt for a moment I am unable to understand the attention you received in all the reputable academic magazines and how they could permit themselves to discuss your book seriously If Hugh Akston were around no academic publication would have dared to treat this as a work admissible into the realm of philosophy"

"He is not around"

Dr Stadler felt that there were words which he was now called upon to pronounce—and he wished he could end this conversation before he discovered what they were

"On the other hand" said Dr Ferris "the ads for my book—oh, I m sure you wouldn t notice such things as ads—quote a letter of high praise which I received from Mr Wesley Mouch"

› the hell is Mr Wesley Mouch?"
Ferris smiled "In another year, even you won't ask that : Dr Stadler Let us put it this way Mr Mouch is the man rationing oil—for the time being"
n I suggest that you stick to your job Deal with Mr Mouch ve him the realm of oil furnaces, but leave the realm of ideas
"
'ould be curious to try to formulate the line of demarcation," Ferris, in the tone of an idle academic remark 'But if we re about my book, why, then we're talking about the realm of relations" He turned to point solicitously at the mathematical is chalked on the blackboard 'Dr Stadler, it would be dis- if you allowed the realm of public relations to distract you ie work which you alone on earth are capable of doing"
ld not
black
him

any
al purpose in your book I dont see what its intended to olish."
't you?' Dr Ferris' eyes flickered briefly to his face the of insolence was too swift to be identified with certainty
annot permit myself to consider certain things as possible in zed society," Dr Stadler said sternly
it is admirably exact," said Dr Ferris cheerfully "You can rmit yourself"
Ferris rose, being first to indicate that the interview was ended : call for me whenever anything occurs in this Institute to you discomfort, Dr Stadler," he said 'It is my privilege al o be at your service"
wing that h h
lizat
iper
r yo
, D
beg you to form

... of trouble, it s falling to pieces and I had or a new one sometime ago, the best one on the market a iond convertible—but Lawrence Hammond went out of busi ist week, without reason or warning so now I'm stuck Those is seem to be vanishing somewhere Something will have done about it"
n Ferris had gone, Dr Stadler sat at his desk his shoul ing together, conscious only of a desperate wish not t y anyone In the fog of the pain which he would not was also the desperate feeling that no one—no one of ued—would ever ... see him again
knew the word

make it

He picked up the book and let it drop into the wastebasket.

A face came to his mind, suddenly and clearly, as if he were seeing the purity of its every line, a young face he had not permitted himself to recall for years He thought No, he has not read this book, he won't see it, he's dead, he must have died long ago

The sharp pain was the shock of discovering simultaneously that this was the man he longed to see more than any other in the world—and that he had to hope that this man was dead

He did not know why—when the telephone rang and his secr why he seize s tremblin ght for ov an appoin indeed

Monday morning? Yes—look, Miss Taggart, I have an engageme in New York today, I could drop in at your office this afternoon, *you wish* No, no—no trouble at all, I'll be delighted. This afternoon, Miss Taggart, about two—I mean, about fo o clock "

He had no engagement in New York He did not give himse time to know what had prompted him to do it. He was smil eagerly, looking at a patch of sunlight on a distant hill

Da— the schedu
and t
calml
in th
easier
to de
effort
carrying supplies to Hammondsville, Colorado

She knew what steps would come next first, the death of special *freights*—then the shrinking in the number of boxcars Hammondsville, attached, like poor relatives, to the rear end freights bound for other towns—then the gradual cutting of stops at Hammondsville Station from the schedules of the passen trains—then the day when she would strike Hammondsville, Co rado, off the map That had been the progression of Wyatt Ju tion and of the town called Stockton.

She knew—once word was received that Lawrence Hammond retired—that it was useless to wait, to hope and to wonder whet his cousin, his lawyer or a committee of local citizens would reo the plant She knew it was time to start cutting the schedules

It had lasted less than six months after Ellis Wyatt had gon

ources and their letterheads "The little fellow's day in the sun," columnist had said Their sun had been the flames that twisted ough the derricks of Wyatt Oil In its glare they made the kind fortunes they had dreamed about, fortunes requiring no comence or effort Then their biggest customers, such as power npanies, who drank oil by the trainful and would make no al vances for human frailty, began to convert to coal—and the aller customers, who were more tolerant began to go out of siness—the boys in Washington imposed rationing on oil and an ergency tax on employers to support the unemployed oil field orkers—than a few of the big oil companies closed down—then little fellows in the sun discovered that a drilling bit which had st a hundred dollars, now cost them five hundred there being no arket for oilfield equipment, and the suppliers having to earn on e drill what they had earned on five or perish—then the pipe es began to close, there being no one able to pay for their up-ep—then the railroads were granted permission to raise their eight rates, there being little oil to carry and the cost of running nk trains having crushed two small lines out of existence—and hen the ...

... Not until their fortunes had vanished and their umps had stopped, did the little fellows realize that no business the country could afford to buy oil at the price it would now take hem to produce it Then the boys in Washington granted subsidies the oil operators but not all of the oil operators had friends in Washington, and there followed a situation which no one cared to xamine too closely or to discuss

Andrew Stockton had been in the sort of position which most of the businessmen envied The rush to convert to coal had descended upon his shoulders like a weight of gold he had kept his plant working around the clock, running a race with next winter's blizzards, casting parts for coal burning stoves and furnaces There were not many dependable foundries left he had become one of the main pillars supporting the cellars and kitchens of the country The pillar collapsed without warning Andrew Stockton announced that he was retiring closed his plant and vanished He left no word on what he wished to be done with the plant or whether his relatives had the right to reopen it

There still were cars on the roads of the country but they moved like travel... rning skeletons of ... skeletons of cars ... the ditches by the ... ty longer, and the ... men still able to

get oil by means of friendships that nobody cared to question. These men bought cars at any price demanded Lights flooded the mountains of Colorado from the great windows of the plant, where the assembly belts of Lawrence Hammond poured trucks and cars to the sidings of Tagga
Hammond had retired
like the single stroke c
local citizens was now broadcasting appeals on the radio begging Lawrence Hammond wherever he was to give them permission to reopen his plant There was no answer
She had screame
Andrew Stockton r
had quit she aske
No Miss Taggart I can't explain it
Stockton had told her on her last trip to Colorado two months ago He never said a word
hes dead or living same as
happened the day before he
came to see him on that last evening A stranger
before They talked late into the night—when I went to sleep the light was still burning in Andrew s study

People were silent in the towns of Colorado Dagny had seen the way they walked in the streets past their small drugstores hardware stores and grocery markets as if they hoped that the motions of their jobs would save them from looking ahead at the future She too had walked through those streets trying not to lift her head not to see the ledges of sooted rock and twisted steel which had been the Wyatt oil fields They could be seen from many of the towns when she had looked ahead she had seen them in the distance

One well on the crest of the hill was still burning Nobody had been able to extinguish it She had seen it from the streets a spurt of fire twisting convulsively against the sky as if trying to tear loose She had seen it at night across the distance of a hundred clear black miles from the window of a train a small violent flame waving in the wind People called it Wyatt s Torch.

The longest train on the John Galt Line had forty cars the fastest ran at fifty miles an hour The engines had to be spared they were coal burning engines long past their age of retirement Jim obtained the oil for the Diesels that pulled the Comet and a few of their transcontinental freights The only source of fuel she could count on and deal with was Ken Danagger of Danagger Coal in Pennsylvania

Empty trains clattered through the four states that were tied neighbors to the throat of Colorado They carried a few carloads of sheep *some* corn some melons and an occasional farmer with an overdressed family who had friends in Washington Jim had obtained a subsidy from Washington for every train that was run not as a profit making carrier but as a service of "public equal

It took every scrap of her energy to keep trains running through the sections where they were still needed in the areas that we

producing But on the balance sheets of Taggart Trans
nental the checks of Jim s subsidies for empty trains bore
figures than the profit brought by the best freight train of
busiest industrial division

most prosperous six months
the glossy pages of his re
ey he had not earned—the
es for empty trains and the money he did not own—the sums
should have gone to pay the interest and the retirement of
art bonds the debt which by the will of Wesley Mouch he had
permitted not to pay He boasted about the greater volume
ght carried by Taggart trains in Arizona—where Dan Conway
closed the last of the Phoenix Durango and retired and in
nesota—where Paul Larkin was shipping iron ore by rail and
ast of the ore boats on the Great Lakes had gone out of ex
ce

ou have always considered money making as such an important
e" Jim had said to her with an odd half smile Well it
s to me that I m better at it than you are"

obody professed to understand the question of the frozen
oad bonds perhaps because everybody understood it too well
irst, there had been signs of a panic among the bondholders
of a dangerous indignation among the public Then Wesley
ch had issued another directive which ruled that people could
heir bonds "defrozen" upon a plea of "essential need" the gov
nent would purchase the bonds if it found the proof of the
l satisfactory There were three questions that no one answered
asked "What constituted proof?" "What constituted need?"
sential—to whom?"

hen it became bad manners to d scuss why one man received
grant defreezing his money while another had been refused
ple turned away in mouth pinched silence if anybody asked a
hy?" One was supposed to describe, not to expla n to catalogue
s, not to evaluate them Mr Smith had been defrozen Mr
es had not that was all And when Mr Jones committed suicide
ple said "Well I don t know if he d really needed his money
government would have given it to him but some men are
greedy"

One was not supposed to speak about the men who hav ng been
used, sold their bonds for one third of the value to other men
o possessed needs which miraculously made thirty three frozen
ts melt into a whole dollar or about a new profession pract ced
bright young boys just out of college who called themselves
freezers" and offered ther serv ces to help you draft your ap
cation in the proper modern terms" The boys had friends in
shington.

Look n
-ion, s
d once
st had

of blood But then, in the concourse of the Terminal she looke at the statue of Nat Taggart and thought It was *your* rail, yo made it, you fought for it, you were not stopped by fear or l loathing—I won t surrender it to the men of blood and rust—an I m the only one left to guard it.

She had not given up her quest for the man who invented t motor It was the only part of her work that made her able bear the rest It was the only goal in sight that gave meaning to h struggle There were times when she wondered why she wanted rebuild that motor What for?—some voice seemed to ask Because I m still alive, she answered But her quest had remain futile Her two engineers had found nothing in Wisconsin. S had sent them to search through the country for men who h worked for Twentieth Century, to learn the name of the invent They had learned nothing She had sent them to search throu the files of the Patent Office, no patent for the motor had ever be registered

The only remnant of her personal quest was the stub of t cigarette with the dollar sign She had forgotten it, until a rec evening

it to her '

man had

it cautiously between two fingers, he had never heard o a brand and wondered how he could have missed it. 'Was it of g quality, Miss Taggart? "The best I've ever smoked." He l shaken his head puzzled He had promised to discover wh those cigarettes were made and to get her a carton

She had tried to find a scientist able to attempt the reconstr tion of the motor She had interviewed the men recommen to her as the best in their field The first one after studying remnants of the motor and of the manuscript, had declared in tone of a drill sergeant that the thing could not work had ne worked and he would prove that no such motor could ever be m to work The second one had drawled in the tone of an ans to a boring imposition that he did not know whether it could done or not and did not care to find out The third had said voice belligerently insolent that he would attempt the task on ten year contract at twenty five thousand dollars a year—"A all Miss Taggart, if you expect to make huge profits on t motor, it s you who should pay for the gamble of my time" fourth who was the youngest, had looked at her silently for a ment and the lines of his face had slithered from blankness a suggestion of contempt. "You know, Miss Taggart, I don't th that such a motor should ever be made, even if somebody did k how to make it It would be so superior to anything we've that it would be unfair to lesser scientists because it would leave field for their achievements and abilities I don t think that strong should have the right to wound the self-esteem of the we She had ordered him out of her office and had sat in incredul horror before the fact that the most vicious statement she had e heard had been uttered in a tone of moral righteousness

decision to speak to Dr Robert Stadler had been her last se

had forced herself to call him, against the resistance of some vable point within her that felt like brakes slammed tight ad argued against herself. She had thought I deal with men

she sat at her desk, over the schedules of the John Galt Line, ng for Dr Stadler to come she wondered why no first rate

mot on
w it was
yourself
possible
agger in

sylvania needs trains more trains if only—

Dr Robert Stadler," said the voice of the interoffice commu tor on her desk

He came in, smiling, the smile seemed to underscore his words ss Taggart, would you care to believe how helplessly glad I am see you again?"

as she answered
ved her slender
ormal movement

head

What if I confessed that all I needed was some plausible ex e in order to come? Would it astonish you?"

I would try not to overtax your courtesy" She did not smile ease sit down Dr Stadler"

He looked brightly around him "I've never seen the office of a lroad executive I didn't know it would be so so solemn place Is that in the nature of the job?"

"The matter on which I'd like to ask your advice is far removed om the field of your interests Dr Stadler You may think it odd at I should call on you Please allow me to explain my reason"

"The fact that you wished to call on me is a fully sufficient rea n. If I can be of any service to you any service whatever I n't know what would please me more at this moment His smile d an attractive quality, the smile of a man of the world who used not to cover his words but to stress the audacity of expressing sincere emotion.

"My problem is a matter of technology" she said in the clear pressionless tone of a young mechanic discussing a difficult as signment. "I fully realize your contempt for that branch of science do not expect you to solve my problem—it is not the kind of work hich you do or care about. I should like only to submit the prob m to you, and then I'll have just two questions to ask you I had

to call on you, because it is a matter that involves someone's mind a very great mind, and"—she spoke impersonally, in the manner of rendering exact justice—"and you are the only great mind in this field"

She could not tell why her words hit him as they did She saw the stillness of his face, the sudden earnestness of the eyes a strange ... and almost pleading then she heard some em...

She told him about the motor and the place where she had found it, she told him that it had proved impossible to learn the name of the inventor, she did not mention the details of her quest She handed him photographs of the motor and the remnant of the manuscript

She watched him as he read She saw the professional assurance in the swift, scanning motion of his eyes, at first, then the pause then the growing intentness, then a movement of his lips which, from another man, would have been a whistle or a gasp She saw him stop for long minutes and look off, as if his mind were racing ... them all—she saw h... e himself to re... continue and ... open before ...

vision She saw his silent excitement, she knew that he had forgotten her office, her existence, everything but the sight of an achievement —and in tribute to his being capable of such reaction, she wished it were possible for her to like Dr. Robert Stadler.

They had been silent for over an hour, when he finished and looked up at her "But this is extraordinary!" he said in the joyous astonished tone of announcing some news she had not expected

She wished she could smile in answer and grant him the comradeship of a joy celebrated together, but she merely nodded and said coldly, "Yes"

"But, Miss Taggart, this is tremendous!"

"Yes"

"Did you sa ... much m... more than tha ... can see what ... concept of en... cording to which his motor would have been impossible He formulated a new premise of his own and he solved the secret of converting static energy into kinetic power Do you know what it means? Do you realize what a feat of pure, abstract science he had to perform before he could make his motor?"

"Who?" she asked quietly

"I beg your pardon?"

"That was the fi... ask you, ... e kn... bout ...

... "No," he said slowly, frowning, "no, I can't think of ...

one And that s odd because an ability of this kind couldn t have passed unnoticed anywhere somebody would have called him to my attention they always sent promising young phys cists to me Did you say you found this in the re
rch laboratory of a plain commercial motor factory?"

"Yes."

"That s odd What was he doing in such a place?"

"Designing a motor "

"That s what I mean. A man with the genius of a great sc entist, o chose to be a commercial inventor? I find it outrageous He nted a motor and he quietly performed a major revolution in the
her to
hy d d

volun
rily

"I beg your pardon?"

"No I I m sorry Dr Stadler I did not intend to discuss any irrelevant subject "

He was looking off pursuing his own course of thought "Why dn t he come to me? Why wasn t he in some great scientific estab shment where he belonged? If he had the brains to achieve this rely he had the brains to know the importance of what he had one. Why didn t he publish a paper on his definition of energy? I an see the general direction he d taken but God damn him'—the ost important pages are miss ng the statement isn t here' Surely omebody around him should have known enough to announce his ork to the whole world of science Why didn t they? How could hey abandon just abandon, a thing of this kind?"

"These are the questions to which I found no answers

"And besides from the purely practical aspect why was that motor left in a junk pile? You d think any greedy fool of an indus rialist would have grabbed it in order to make a fortune No intelli gence was needed to see its commercial value "

She smiled for the first time—a smile ugly with bitterness she said nothing

"You found it impossible to trace the inventor?" he asked

"Completely impossible—so far

"Do you think that he is still alive?

"I have reason to think that he is But I can t be sure "

"Suppose I tried to advertise for him?"

"No Don t."

"But if I were to place ads in sc entific publicat ons and have Dr Ferris"—he stopped he saw her glance at him as swiftly as he glanced at her· she said nothing but she held his glance he looked away and finished the sentence coldly and firmly— and have Dr Ferris broadcast on the rad o that *I* wish to see him would he refuse to come?"

"Yes, Dr Stadler I think he would refuse "

He was not looking at her She saw the faint tighten ng of his facial muscles and simultaneously the look of someth ng going

slack in the lines of his face, she could not tell what sort of light was dying within him nor what made her think of the death of a light

He tossed the manuscript down on the desk with a casual contemptuous movement of his wrist "Those men who do not mind being practical enough to sell their brains for money, ought to acquire a little knowledge of the conditions of practical reality"

He looked at her with a touch of defiance, as if waiting for an angry answer B
mained expressi
were of no conc
question I wante
to tell me the name of any physicist you know who, in your judgment, would possess the ability to attempt the reconstruction of this motor'

He looked at her and chuckled, it was a sound of pain "Have you been tortured by it too Miss Taggart? By the impossibility of finding any sort of intelligence anywhere?"

"I have interviewed some physicists who were highly recommended to me and I have found them to be hopeless"

He leaned forward eagerly 'Miss Taggart," he asked, "did you call on me because you trusted the integrity of my scientific judgment? The question was a naked plea

'Yes she answered evenly, 'I trusted the integrity of your scientific judgment'

ing
sai
cause you see, this has been my hardest problem—trying to find men of talent for my own staff Talent, hell! I d be satisfied with just a semblance of promise—but the men they send me couldn t be honestly said to possess the potentiality of developing into decent garage mechanics I don t know whether I am getting older and more demanding, or whether the human race is degenerating but the world didn t seem to be so barren of intelligence in my youth Today if you saw the kind of men I've had to interview, you d—"

He stopped abruptly as if at a sudden recollection He remained silent, he seemed to be considering something he knew, but did not wish to tell *her she* became certain of it, when he concluded brusquely, in that tone of resentment which conceals an evasion, "No I don't know anyone I d care to recommend to you"

"This was all I wanted to ask you, Dr Stadler," she said. "Thank you for giving me your time'

He sat silently still for a moment, as if he could not bring himself to leave

"Miss Taggart, he asked, "could you show me the actual motor itself?

She looked at h ... h. But
it s in an ...
"I don t ... I have

special motive It's only my personal curiosity I would like to [illegible] it—that's all"

When they stood in the granite vault, over a glass case containing [illegible] shape of broken metal, he took off his hat with a slow, absent [illegible]ovement—and she could not tell whether it was the routine gesture [illegible] remembering that he was in a room with a lady, or the gesture of [illegible]ring one's head over a coffin.

They stood in silence, in the glare of a single light refracted from [illegible]e glass surface to their faces Train wheels were clicking in the [illegible]stance, and it seemed at times as if a sudden sharper jolt of vibra[illegible]on were about to awaken an answer from the corpse in the glass [illegible]se

"It's so wonderful," said Dr Stadler, his voice low "It's so won[illegible]erful to see a great, new, crucial idea which is not mine!"

She looked at him, wishing she could believe that she understood [illegible]m correctly He spoke in passionate sincerity, discarding conven[illegible]on, discarding concern for whether it was proper to let her hear [illegible]e confession of his pain, seeing nothing but the face of a woman [illegible]ho was able to understand

"Miss Taggart, do you know the hallmark of the second rater? [illegible]

[illegible]espect and an achievement to admire They bare their teeth at you from out of their rat holes, thinking that you take pleasure in letting your brilliance dim them—while you'd give a year of your life to see a flicker of talent anywhere among them They envy achievement, and their dream of greatness is a world where all men have become their acknowledged inferiors They don't know that that dream is the infallible proof of mediocrity, because that sort of world is what the man of achievement would not be able to bear They have no way of knowing what he feels when surrounded by inferiors—hatred? no, not hatred, but boredom—the terrible, hopeless, draining, paralyzing boredom. Of what account are praise and adulation from men whom you don't respect? Have you ever felt the longing for someone you could admire? For something, not to look down at, but up to?"

"I've felt it all my life," she said. It was an answer she could not refuse him

"I know," he said—and there was beauty in the impersonal gentleness [illegible] ou. That [illegible] ant, but [illegible] ne quiet [illegible]"

"[illegible] understand" she [illegible] was the only form [illegible]

"M[illegible] the glass case," [illegible] construc[illegible]tion of that motor He would not work for me—so he is probably the kind of man you want"

But by the time he raised his head—and before he saw the look of admiration in her eyes the open look he had begged for the look of forgiveness—he destroyed his single moment's atonement by adding in a voice of drawing room sarcasm Apparently the young [illegible] the welfare of

[illegible]

p[illegible]vate em[illegible]ployer

He turned away not to see the look that was fading from her face not to let himself know its meaning Yes she said her voice hard he is probably the kind of man I want"

He's a young physicist from the Utah Institute of Technology" he said dryly His name is Quentin Daniels A friend of mine sent him to me a fe[illegible] but he would not take the job I [illegible] of a scient st [illegible] but at least h[illegible] reach him at the Utah Institute of Technology I don't know what he's doing there now—they closed the Institute a year ago"

'Thank you Dr Stadler I shall get in touch with him"

If [illegible] if you want me to I'll be glad to help him with the theoretical part of it I'm going to do some work myself starting from the leads of that manuscript. I'd like to find the cardinal secret of energy that its author had found It's his basic principle that we must discover If we succeed Mr Daniels may finish the job as far as your motor is concerned"

I will appreciate any help you may care to give me Dr Stadler"

They walked silently through the dead tunnels of the Terminal, down the ties of a rusted track under a string of blue lights to the distant glow of the platforms

At the mouth of the tunnel they saw a man kneeling on the track, hammering at a switch with the unrhythmical exasperation of uncertainty Another man stood watching him impatiently

Well what's the matter with the damn thing? asked the watcher

Don't know"

You've been at it for an hour

"*Yeah*"

"How long is it going to take?

"Who is John Galt?

Dr Stadler winced They had gone past the men when he said "I don't like that expression

"I don't either she answered

Where did it come from?"

"Nobody knows

They were silent, then he said "I knew a John Galt once Only he died long ago"

"Who was he?"

"I used to think that he was still alive But now I'm certain that he must have died He had such a mind that had he lived the whole world would have been talking of him by now"

"But the whole world *is* talking of him"

He stopped still "Yes . . ." he said slowly, staring at a thought at had never struck him before, "yes . . . Why?" The word was avy with the sound of terror.

"Who was he, Dr Stadler?"

"Why are they talking of him?"

"Who was he?"

He shook his head with a shudder and said sharply, "It's just a oincidence The name is not uncommon at all It's a meaningless oincidence It has no connection with the man I knew That man is ead"

He did not permit himself to know the full meaning of the words e added

"He has to be dead"

* *

The order that lay on his desk was marked 'Confidential Emergency . Priority . . . Essential need certified by office of Top Co-ordinator . . . for the account of Project X"—and demanded that he sell ten thousand tons of Rearden Metal to the State Science Institute

Rearden read it and glanced up at the superintendent of his mills who stood before him without moving The superintendent had come in and put the order down on his desk without a word

"I thought you'd want to see it," he said, in answer to Rearden's glance

Rearden pressed a button, summoning Miss Ives He handed the order to her and said, "Send this back to wherever it came from Tell them that I will not sell any Rearden Metal to the State Science Institute"

Gwen Ives and the superintendent looked at him, at each other and back at him again, what he saw in their eyes was congratulation.

"Yes, Mr Rearden," Gwen Ives said formally, taking the slip as if it were any other kind of business paper She bowed and left the room The superintendent followed

Rearden [illegible] He felt nothin [illegible]

[illegible] him able to watch dispassionately the working of the Fair Share Law

Nobody had known how that law was to be observed First, he had been told [illegible] Rearden Metal in an amount

an equal share of Rearden Metal The waiting list of orders could not be filled in three years even had he been permitted to work at full capacity New orders were coming in daily They were not orders any longer in the old honorable sense of trade they were demands The law provided that he could be sued by any consumer who failed to receive his fair share of Rearden Metal

Nobody had known
share of what amount
had been sent to him fr
tribution After many t
boy announced that customers would get five hundred tons of the Metal each in the order of the dates of their applications Nobody had argued against his figure There was no way to form an argument the figure could have been one pound or one million tons with the same validity The boy had established an office at the Rearden mills where four girls took applications for shares of Rearden Metal At the present rate of the mills' production, the applications extended well into the next century

Five hundred tons of Rearden Metal could not provide three miles of rail for Taggart Transcontinental, it could not provide the bracing for one of Ken Danagger's coal mines The largest industries Rearden's best customers were denied the use of his Metal. But golf clubs made of Rearden Metal were suddenly appearing on the market as well as coffee pots garden tools and bathroom faucets Ken Danagger who had seen the value of the Metal and had dared to order it against a fury of public opinion was not permitted to obtain it, his order had been left unfilled cut off without warning by the new laws Mr Mowen who had betrayed Taggart Transcontinental in its most dangerous hour, was now making switches of Rearden Metal and selling them to the Atlantic Southern Rearden looked on his emotions plugged out

He turned away without a word, when anybody mentioned to him what everybody knew the quick fortunes that were being made on Rearden Metal "Well no people said in drawing rooms "you mustn't call it black market because it isn't, really Nobody is selling the *Metal* illegally They're just selling their *right* to it Not selling really just pooling their shares" He did not want to know the insect … sold
and … in
two … Metal
—no … man in Wash… 's unlisted
partner He knew that
five times larger than
right to the Metal exc

The young boy from Washington—whom the steel workers had nicknamed the Wet Nurse—hung around Rearden with a primitive astonished curiosity which, incredibly, was a form of admiration. Rearden watched him with disgusted amusement The boy had no inkling of any concept of morality, it had been bred out of him by his college this had left him an odd frankness, naïve and cynical at like the innocence of a savage

"You despise me, Mr Rearden," he had declared once, suddenly d without any resentment "That's impractical "
"Why is it impractical?" Rearden had asked
The boy had looked puzzled and had found no answer He never d an answer to any "why?' He spoke in flat assertions He would y about people, He's old fashioned," "He's unreconstructed," le's unadjusted, without hesitation or explanation, he would also y, while being a graduate in metallurgy, "Iron smelting, I think, ems to require a high temperature " He uttered nothing but uncerin opinions about physical nature—and nothing but categorical iperatives about men.
"Mr Rearden," he had said once, "if you feel you'd like to hand it more of the Metal to friends of yours—I mean, in bigger hauls it could be arranged

xige Of course, there would be a few expenses For things in Washington You know how it is, things always occasion expenses '
"What things?"
"You understand what I mean "
"No," Rearden had said, 'I don't Why don't you explain it to me?"
The boy had looked at him uncertainly, weighed it in his mind, ien come out with "It's bad psychology "
"What is?"
"You know, Mr Rearden, it's not necessary to use such words as at."
"As what?"
"Words are relative They're only symbols If we don't use ugly symbols we won't have any ugliness Why do you want me to say things one way, when I've already said them another?"
"Which way do I want you to say them?"
"Why do you want me to?"
"For the same reason that you don't.'
The boy had remained silent for a moment, then had said "You now Mr Rearden, there are no absolute standards We can't go by rigid principles, we've got to be flexible, we've got to adjust to the eal ty of the day and act on the expediency of the moment.
"Run along

A
feel
he

carried back across a long span of centuries to the age where the boy had belonged, but he, Rearden, had not. Instead of building new furnaces, thought Rearden, he was now running a losing race to keep the old ones going, instead of starting new ventures, new research, new experiments in the use of Rearden Metal, he was spending the whole of his energy on a quest for sources of iron ore like

the men at the dawn of the Iron Age—he thought—but with less hope

He tried to avoid these thoughts He had to stand on guard against his own feeling—as if some part of him had become a stranger that had to be kept numb, and his will had to be its constant watchful anesthetic That part was an unknown of which he knew only that he must never see its root and never give it voice. He had lived through one dangerous moment which he could not allow to return

It was th[illegible] evening.
held paraly[illegible]
umn of dir[illegible]
news of E[illegible]
before any thought of the future, any sense of disaster, any shock, terror or protest—had been to burst out laughing He had laughed in triumph in deliverance, in a spurting living exultation—and the words which he had not pronounced, but felt were God bless you, Ellis, whatever you re doing!

When he had grasped the implications of his laughter, he had known that he was now condemned to constant vigilance against himself Like the survivor of a heart attack he knew that he had had a warning and that he carried within him a danger that could strike him at any moment.

He had held it off since then He had kept an even, cautious, severely controlled pace in his inner steps But it had come close to him for a moment, once again When he had looked at the order of the State Science Institute on his desk, it had seemed to him that the glow moving over the paper did not come from the furnaces outside, but from the flames of a burning oil field

"Mr Rearden" said the Wet Nurse, when he heard about the rejected order, "you shouldn t have done that"

"Why not?"

"There's going to be trouble"

"What kind of trouble?"

"It s a government order You can't reject a government order"

"Why can't I?"

"It s an Essential Need project, and secret, too It s very important."

"What kind of a project is it?"

"I don t know It s secret."

"Then how do you know it s important?"

"It said so"

"Who said so?"

"You can t doubt such a thing as that, Mr Rearden!"

"Why can't I?"

"But you can t."

"If I can't, then that would make it an absolute and you said there aren t any absolutes"

"That s different"

"How is it different?"

"It s the government."

ou mean, there aren't any absolutes except the government?"
mean if they say it s important, then it is "
Why?"
don't want you to get in trouble, Mr Rearden, and you're
to, sure as hell. You ask too many why's Now why do you
at?"

ame from the State Science Institute or from Washington "
I understand that you refused to sell metal to the State Science
itute, Mr Rearden," he said in a soft, confidential tone of voice
That's right," said Rearden
But wouldn't that constitute a willful disobedience of the law?"
It s for you to interpret."
May I ask your reason?"
My reason is of no interest to you "
Oh, but of course it is! We are not your enemies, Mr Rearden
want to be fair to you You mustn't be afraid of the fact that
st you We actually
laborer We would

reader will tell you
little over a year

"Oh, no, no, no! Why talk of newspapers? Can't we settle this as
friendly, private matter?"
"That's up to you."
"We don't want this in the newspapers "
"No?"
"No W

it permit me to tell you its nature in fuller detail "
"You know," said Rearden, "I could tell you—as my reason—
at I do no
ecret from
know fo
"Oh, but
lieve you responsibility "
"Suppose I don't wish to be relieved of it?"
"But but that is an old fashioned and and purely theo-
retical attitude "
"I said I could name it as my reason But I won t—because, in
his case, I have another, inclusive reason. I would not sell any

Rearden Metal to the State Science Institute for any purpose whatever good or bad secret or open"

But why?"

"Listen said Rearden slowly, "there might be some sort of justification for the savage societies in which a man had to expect th... on ... ...d to defend

I dont think its advisable to use such words Mr Rearden I don t think its practical to think in such terms After all the government cannot—in the pursuit of wide national policies—take cognizance of your personal grudge against some one particular institution"

"Then don t take cognizance of it."

What do you mean?

"Don t come asking my reason"

But, Mr Rearden we cannot let a refusal to obey the law pass unnoticed What do you expect us to do?

"Whatever you wish

But this is totally unprecedented. Nobody has ever refused to sell an essential commodity to the government As a matter of fact the law does not permit you to refuse to sell your Metal to any consumer let alone the government"

"Well why don t you arrest me then?

"Mr Rearden this is an amicable discussion Why speak of such things as arrests?"

"Isn t that your ultimate argument against me?"

"Why bring it up?'

"Isn t it implied in every sentence of this discussion?"

Why name it?"

"Why not? There was no answer "Are you trying to hide from me the fact that if it weren't for that trump card of yours I wouldn't have allowed you to enter this office?"

"But I m not speaking of arrests"

"I am

"I don t understand you Mr Rearden"

"I am not helping you to pretend that this is any sort of amicable discussion It isn t Now do what you please about it

There was a strange look on the man s face bewilderment as if he had no conception of the issue confronting him and fear as if he had always had full knowledge of it and had lived in dread of exposure.

Rearden felt a strange excitement he felt as if he were about to grasp something he had never understood as if he were on the trail of some discovery ... had the most ...

"Mr

Yo ...

ot up and walked to the window "I'll tell you what you can do" e pointed to the siding where ingots of Rearden Metal were being aded onto freight cars "There's Rearden Metal Drive down there ith your trucks—like any other looter, but without his risk be ause I won't shoot you, as you know I can t—take as much of the Metal as you wish and go Don t try to send me payment I won't ccept it. Don t print out a check to me It won t be cashed If you ant that Metal you have the guns to seize it Go ahead

"Good God Mr Rearden what would the public think!"

I ..

"I don't think so" said Rearden

He knew that the incident was not ended He knew also that the ecrecy of Project X was not the main reason why these people eared to make the issue public He knew that he felt an odd joyous ght hearted self-confidence He knew that these were the right steps down the trail he had glimpsed

* *

Dagny lay stretched in an armchair of her living room her eyes closed This day had been hard but she knew that she would see Hank Rearden tonight The thought of it was like a lever lifting the weight of hours of senseless ugliness away from her

She lay still content to rest with the single purpose of waiting quietly for the sound of the key in the lock He had not telephoned her but she had heard that he was in New York today for a confer ence with producers of copper and he never left the city till next morning nor ...

... workday was not that it had been lived but that it had been survived It was wrong she thought it was viciously wrong that one should ever be forced to say that about any hour of one s life But she could not think of it now She was thinking of him of the struggle she had watched through the months behind them his struggle for deliverance, she had known that she could help him win, but must help him in every way except in words

She thought of the evening last winter when he came in took a small package from his pocket and held it out to her saying, "I want you to have it" She opened it and stared in incredulous bewilderment at a pendant made ...

violent

stone,

purcha

"Hank why?"

No special reason. I just wanted to see you wear it"

Oh, no, not a thing of this kind! Why waste it? I go so rarely occasions where one has to dress When would I ever wear it?"

He looked at her, his glance moving slowly from her legs to face "I'll show you he said

He led her to the bedroom, he took off her clothes, withot word in the manner of an owner undressing a person whose con is not required He clasped the pendant on her shoulders She st naked, the stone between her breasts, like a sparkling drop of bl

'Do you think a man should give jewelry to his mistress for purpose but his own pleasure?' he asked "This is the way I you to wear it Only for me I like to look at it Its beautiful."

She laughed it was a soft, low, breathless sound She could speak or move only nod silently in acceptance and obedience nodded several times her hair swaying with the wide, circular m ment of her head then hanging still as she kept her head bowe him

She dropped down on the bed She lay stretched lazily, her thrown back, her arms at her sides, palms pressed to the r texture of the bedspread, one leg bent, the long line of the extended across the dark blue linen of the spread, the stone glo like a wound in the semi-darkness, throwing a star of rays ag her skin

Her eyes were half-closed in the mocking conscious trium being admired but her mouth was half-open in helpless be expectation. He stood across the room, looking at her at he stomach drawn in as her breath was drawn, at the sensitive bo a sensitive consciousness He said, his voice low, intent and quiet

"Dagny if some artist painted you as you are now, men come to look at the painting to experience a moment that no could give them in their own lives They would call it great art would not know the nature of what they felt, but the painting show them everything—even that you're not some classical

"Oh yes, Hank, I understand!' she said Do you ... you understand it fully?—she thought, but did not say it alou

On the evening of a blizzard, she came home to find an ent spread of tropical flowers standing in her living room agai dark glass of windows battered by snowflakes They were st Hawaiian Torch Ginger ...

as wasted as an object in a public window "

He telephoned her at the office one winter morning and said not the tone of an invitation but in the tone of an execut ve s order Ve re going to have dinner together tonight I want you to dress) you have any sort of blue evening gown? Wear it.

The dress she wore was a slender tunic of dusty blue that gave ... in the blue ... rought and ... allowed her ... Hank that s ... No? he ked, drawing her to a mirror

The huge blanket of fur made her look like a ch ld bundled for a owstorm the luxur ous texture transformed the innocence of the vkward bundle into the elegance of a perversely intentional con ast into a look of stressed sensual ty The fur was a soft brown mmed by an aura of blue that could not be seen only felt like 1 envelop ng ...

She sat bes de him in his car as he drove through the dark streets the city A sparkling net of snow flashed into s ght once in a hile when they went past the lights on the corners She did not k where they were going She sat low in the seat leaning back oking up at the snowflakes The fur cape was wrapped tightly bout her within it her dress felt as l ght as a nightgown and the d of the cape was like an embrace

She looked at the angular tiers of l ghts r sing through the snowy arta n f
heel at
at and
'y amc

The car went down into a tunnel, streaked through an echoing tube of tile under the river and rose to the coils of an elevated highway under an open black sky The lights were below them now spread

cranes,

torted

him on

in acid

wore his formal clothes He belonged here, too—she thought, ing down at the flats of New Jersey—among the cranes the fir and the grinding clatter of gears

When they sped down a dark road through an empty country with the strands of snow glittering across their headlights—sl remembered how he had looked in the summer of their vacation dressed in slacks stretched on the ground of a lonely ravine wi the grass under his body and the sun on his bare arms He belong in the countryside she thought—he belonged everywhere—he was man who belonged on earth—and then she thought of the wor which were more exact he was a man to whom the earth belonge the man at home on earth and in control Why, then—she wondered should he have had to carry a burden of tragedy which in sile endurance he had accepted so completely that he had barely kno he carried it? She knew part of the answer, she felt as if the whc answer were close and she would grasp it on some approaching da But she did not want to think of it now, because they were movi away from the burdens because within the space of a speeding c they held the stillness of full happiness She moved her head imp ceptibly to let it touch his shoulder for a moment

The car left the highway and turned toward the lighted squares distant windows that hung above the snow beyond a grillwork bare branches Then in a soft dim light they sat at a table by window facing darkness and trees The inn stood on a knoll in t woods, it had the luxury of high cost and privacy, and an air beautiful taste suggesting that it had not been discovered by th who sought high cost and notice She was barely aware of the din room it blended away into a sense of superlative comfort, and t only ornament that caught her attention was the glitter of ic branches beyond the glass of the window

She sat, looking out, the blue fur half slipping off her naked ar and shoulders He watched her through narrowed eyes, with the s isfaction of a man studying his own workmanship

"I like giving things to you" he said "because you don't n them"

"No?"

"And it's not that I want you to have them I want you to h them *from me*"

"That is the way I do need them Hank From you"

"Do you understand that it s nothing but vicious self indulge on my part? I m not doing it for your pleasure, but for mine"

"Hank!" The cry was involuntary, it held amusement dep indignation and pity "If you d given me those things just for

asure not yours I would have thrown them in your face "

'Yes Yes, then you would—and should "

'Did you call it your vicious self indulgence?"

'That s what they call it."

'Oh yes' That s what they call it What do *you* call it Hank?"

'I don t know," he said indifferently, and went on intently 'I ow only that if it s vicious then let me be damned for it, but

w to do t I d d ... to know how m ch I wanted

r—including the preposterous feat of turning *you* into a luxury oject."

"But I m a luxury object that you ve paid for long ago," she said, e was not smiling

"How?"

"By means of the same values with which you paid for your ills."

She did not know whether he understood it with that full, uminous finality which is a thought named in words but she knew hat what he felt in that moment was understanding She saw the elaxation of an invisible smile in his eyes

"I've never despised luxury ' he said "yet I ve always despised hose ...

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ous ness "

He looked at the dim sculptured beauty of the room and at the people who sat at the tables They sat in a manner of self-conscious display as if the enormous cost of their clothes and the enormous care of their grooming should have fused into splendor, but didn t. Their faces had a look of rancorous anxiety

"Dagny look at those people They re supposed to be the playboys of life the amusement-seekers and luxury lovers They sit there waiting for this place to give them meaning not the other way around But they re always shown to us as the enjoyers of material pleasures—and then we re taught that enjoyment of

rial pleasures is evil Enjoyment? Are they enjoying it? Isn't ther some sort of perversion in what we're taught, some error vicious and very important?'

'Yes, Hank—very vicious and very, very important"

'They are the playboys, while we're just tradesmen, you and I Do you realize that we're much more capable of enjoying this plac than they can ever hope to be?"

"Yes"

He said sl [illegible] left [illegible] all to fools?

He smiled [illegible] didn t answer you then, because the only answer I had, [illegible] thing your words meant to me, was an answer that you would ha me for, I thought, it was that I wanted you" He looked at her "Dagny, you didn t intend it then, but what you were saying wa that you wanted to sleep with me, wasn't it?'

"Yes, Hank Of course"

He held her eyes, then looked away. They were silent for a lon time He glanced at the soft twilight around them, then at th sparkle of two wine glasses on their table "Dagny, in my youth when I was working in the ore mines in Minnesota, I thought tha I wanted to reach an evening like this No, that was not what I wa work [illegible] winte [illegible] was [illegible] earth [illegible] ledge—I thought that some day I would sit in a place like this where one drink of wine would cost more than my day's wages, and I would have earned the price of every minute of it and of every drop and of every flower on the table, and I would sit there for no purpose but my own amusement"

She asked, smiling, "With your mistress?"

She saw the shot of pain in his eyes and wished desperately tha she had not said it

"With [illegible] a woman," he answered She knew the word he had not pronounced He went on, his voice soft and steady "When I became rich and saw what the rich did for their amusement I *thought* that the place I had imagined, did not exist I had not even imagined it too clearly I did not know what it would be like only what I would feel I gave up expecting it years ago But I feel it tonight"

He [illegible]

ce[illegible]

"I [illegible] dearest

She sat shocked and still he had never used that word before He threw his *head back* and smiled the most brilliantly gay smile she had ever seen on his face.

"Your first moment of weakness, Dagny," he said

She laughed and shook her head He stretched his arm across the

rs.

When she looked up at him, her smile matched his—and the rest the evening was their celebration—for all his years since the ghts on the mine ledges—for all her years since the night of her

... in what we're taught ... some error that's ...ious and very important?"—she thought of his words, as she lay an armchair of her living room, on a dismal evening of spring, ...ting for him to come . . Just a little farther, my darling—she ...ought—look a little farther and you'll be free of that error and of ...l the wasted pain you never should have had to carry But ...e felt that she, too, had not seen the whole of the distance, and ...e wondered what were the steps left for her to discover

Walking through the darkness of the streets on his way to her ...artment, Rearden kept his hands in his coat pockets and his arms ...essed to his sides, because he felt that he did not want to touch ...ything or brush against anyone He had never experienced it ...fore—this sense of revulsion that was not aroused by any particu... ...r object, but seemed to flood everything around him making the ...ty seem sodden He could understand disgust for any one thing, ...d he could fight that thing with the healthy indignation of know...g that it did not belong in the world, but this was new to him—...is feeling that the world was a loathsome place where he did not ...ant to belong.

He had held a conference with the producers of copper, who had ...st been garroted by a set of directives that would put them out of ...istence in another year He had had no advice to give them, no ...olution to offer, his ingenuity, which had made him famous as the ...an who would always find a way to keep production going, had ...ot been able to discover a way to save them But they had all ...nown that there was no way, ingenuity was a virtue of the mind—...d in the issue confronting them, the mind had been discarded as ...relevant long ago "It's a deal between the boys in Washington and ...he importers of copper," one of the men had said, "mainly d'An...onia Copper"

This was only a small, extraneous stab of pain he thought, a feel...ng of disappointment in an expectation he had never had the right ...o expect, he should have known that this was just what a man like Francisco d'Anconia would do—and he wondered angrily why he ...elt as if a bright, brief flame had died somewhere in a lightless ...orld.

He did not know whether the impossibility of acting had given ...im this sense of loathing or whether the loathing had made him ...ose the desire to act It's both, he thought a desire presupposes the possibility of action to achieve it, action presupposes a goal which is

worth achieving If the only goal possible was to wheedle a pr carious moment's favor from men who held guns, then neith action nor desire could exist any longer.

Then could life?—he asked himself indifferently Life, he thoug had been defined as motion, man's life was purposeful motion wh was the state of a being to whom purpose and motion were denied, being he
nificence
"Why?"

He shrugged walking on, he did not care even to find an answer

He observed, indifferently, the devastation wrought by his ow indifference No matter how hard a struggle he had lived through the past, he had never reached the ultimate ugliness of abandonm the will to act In moments of suffering, he had never let pain w its one permanent victory he had never allowed it to make hi lose the desire for joy He had never doubted the nature of th world or man's greatness as its motive power and its core Yea ago, he had wondered with contemptuous incredulity about th fanatical sects that appeared among men in the dark corners of hi tory the sects

not want to touch any part of it, he did not want to li it, he was an outsider with nothing at stake and no concern fo *remaining* alive much longer

Dagny and his wish to see her were the only exception left t him The wish remained But in a sudden shock, he realized that h felt no desire to sleep with her tonight That desire—which had never given him feeling
on its own satisf
neither of his m
had ever felt it,
but what came f
feel, not a feeling
its ro
that n

"D
ing for me that I want to look at it longer"

He said it, from the doorway of her apartment, seeing her stretched

actions
nse of
gaiety were real He grasped a *feeling that he* had always experienced, but never identified because it had always been absolute and immediate a *feeling that* forbade him ever to face her in pain It was much more than the pride of wishing to conceal his suffering it was the feeling that suffering must not be granted recognition in her presence, that *no form* of claim between them should ever be motivated by pain and aimed at pity. It was not pity that he

brought here or came here to find

"Do you still need proof that I'm always waiting for you?" she asked, leaning obediently back in her chair, her voice was neither -nder nor pleading but bright and mocking

"Dagny, why is it that most women would never admit that, but ou do?"

"Because they're never sure that they ought to be wanted I am."

"I do admire self-confidence."

"Self-confidence was only one part of what I said, Hank."

"What's the whole? '

"Confidence of my value—and yours " He glanced at her as if atching the spark of a sudden thought, and she laughed adding I wouldn't be sure of holding a man like Orren Boyle for instance. le wouldn't want me at all. You would "

"Are you saying ' he asked slowly, "that I rose in your estimation hen you found that I wanted you?"

"Of course "

"That's not the reaction of most people of being wanted "

"It isn't."

"Most people feel that they rise in their own eyes if others want hem."

"I feel that others live up to me if they want me And that is he way you feel, too, Hank, about yourself—whether you admit it or not."

That's not what I said to you then on that first morning—he thought, looking down at her She lay stretched out lazily, her face blank, but her eyes bright with amusement. He knew that she was thinking of it and that she knew he was He smiled but said nothing else

As he sat half-stretched on the couch watching her across the room, he felt at peace—as if some temporary wall had risen be tween him and the things he had felt on his way here He told her about his encounter with the man from the State Science Institute because even though he knew that the event held danger an odd glowing sense of satisfaction still remained from it in his mind

He chuckled at her look of indignation "Don't bother being angry at them " he said "It's no worse than all the rest of what they're doing every day "

"Hank do you want me to speak to Dr Stadler about it? '

"Certainly not!"

"H

do

"In regard to the motor "

"The motor ?" He said it slowly in a strange way as if the thought of the motor had suddenly brought back to him a realm he had forgotten Dagny the man who invented that motor he did exist, didn't he?"

"Why . . . of course What do you mean?"

"I mean only that . . . that it's a pleasant thought, isn't it? Even if he's dead now, he was alive once . . . so alive that he designed that motor. . . ."

"What's the matter, Hank?"

"Nothing Tell me about the motor "

... Dr. Stadler. She got up and

The first thing he noticed were the lights of the city beyond the window he felt as if they were being turned on, one by one, forming the great skyline he loved, he felt it, even though he knew that the lights had been there all the time Then he understood that the thing which was returning was within him· the shape coming back

angular lines of a face stripped of everything but purpose—the rising steps of steel and the steps of a being intent upon his goal—this is what they had been, all the men who had lived to invent the lights, the steel, the furnaces, the motors—*they* were the world, *they*, not the men who crouched in dark corners, half begging, half-threatening, boastfully displaying their open sores as their only claim on life and virtue—so long as he knew that there existed one man with the bright courage of a new thought, could he give up the world to those others?—so long as he could find a single sight to give him a life-restoring shot of admiration, could he believe that the world belonged to the sores, the moans and the guns?—the men who invented motors did exist, he would never doubt their reality, it was his vision of them that had made the contrast unbearable, so ... them and to

...ning

...ller"

His face was bright with confidence, his voice sounded amused, protective and gentle, she could discover nothing else, he looked as he had always looked, it was only the note of gentleness that seemed strange and new

"I kept feeling that I shouldn't have," she said, "but I didn't know why "

"I'll tell you why " He leaned forward "What he wanted from you was a recognition that he was still the Dr. Robert Stadler he should have been, but wasn't and knew he wasn t He wanted you to ... him your respect, in spite of and in contradiction to his

ions He wanted you to juggle reality for him, so that his great-
s would remain, but the State Science Institute would be wiped
, as if it had never existed—and you're the only one who could
it for him"

"Why I?"

"Because you're the victim"

Dagny, they're doing something that we've never understood
ey know something which we don't, but should discover I can't
it fully yet, but I'm beginning to see parts of it That looter from
State Science Institute was scared when I refused to help him
etend that he was just an honest buyer of my Metal He was
ared way deep Of what? I don't know—public opinion was just
s name for it, but it's not the full name Why should he have
en scared? He has the guns, the jails, the laws—he could have
ized the whole of my mills, if he wished, and nobody would have
en to defend me, and he knew it—so why should he have cared
hat I thought? But he did It was I who had to tell him that he
asn't a looter, but my customer and friend That's what he needed

orld as they pretend they see it. They need some sort of sanction
om us I don't know the nature of that sanction—but, Dagny, I
now that if we value our lives, we must not give it to them If they
ut you on a torture rack, don't give it to them Let them destroy
our railroad and my mills, but don't give it to them Because I
now this much I know that that's our only chance

She had remained standing still before him, looking attentively at
e faint outline of some shape she, too, had tried to grasp

"Yes . . ." she said "yes, I know what you've seen in them
ve felt it, too—but it's only like something brushing past that's
one before I know I've seen it, like a touch of cold air, and what's
eft is always the feeling that I should have stopped it I know
hat you're right I can't understand their game but this much is
ight We must not see the world as they want us to see it It's some
ort of fraud, very ancient and very vast—and the key to break it
s to check every premise they teach us, to question every precept,
o—"

She whirled to him at a sudden thought but she cut the motion
and the words in the same instant the next words would have been
he ones she did not want to say to him She stood looking at him
with a slow, bright smile of curiosity

Somewhere within him, he knew the thought she would not name,
but he knew it only in that prenatal shape which has to find its
words in the future He did not pause to grasp it now—because in
the flooding brightness of what he felt, another thought, which was

its predecessor, had become clear to him and had been holding hı
for many minutes past He rose, approached her and took her ı
his arms

He held the length of her body pressed to his, as if their bod
were two currents rising upward together, each to a single poı
each carrying the whole of their consciousness to the meeting (
their lips

What she felt in that moment contained, as one nameless part (
it, the knowledge of the beauty in the posture of his body as he he
her, as they stood in the middle of a room high above the lights (
the city

What he knew, what he had discovered tonight, was that his r
captured love of existence had not been given back to him by th
return of his desire for her—but that the desire had returned aft
he had regained his world, the love, the value and the sense of h
world—and that the desire was not an answer to her body, but
celebration of himself and of his will to live

Chapter II THE ARISTOCRACY OF PULL

The calendar in the sky beyond the window of her office sai
September 2 Dagny leaned wearily across her desk The first light
snap on at the approach of dusk was always the ray that hit t
calendar, when the white-glowing page appeared above the roo
it blurred the city, hastening the darkness

She had looked at that distant page every evening of the mont
behind her Your days are numbered, it had seemed to say—as
it were marking a progression toward something it knew, but s
didn't Once, it had clocked her race to build the John Galt Lin
now it was clocking her race against an unknown destroyer.

One by one, the men who had built new towns in Colorado, h
departed into some silent unknown, from which no voice or pers
had yet returned The towns they had left were dying Some of t

... the lights had gone out ...
another, the men had vanished There had been a pattern about
which she felt, but could not define, she had become able to p
dict, almost with certainty, who would go next and when, she w
unable to grasp the "why?"

Of the men who had once greeted her descent from the cab of
engine on the platform of Wyatt Junction, only Ted Nielsen was le
still running the plant of Nielsen Motors "Ted, you won't be t

next one to go?" she had asked him, on his recent visit to New York she had asked it trying to smile He had answered grimly "I hope not." "What do you mean you hope?—aren t you sure?"

ied terror of the inexplicable—unless they had some reason of

oger Marsh of Marsh Elec

ed to his desk so that he

ter what ghastly temptation

at the men who d left He

ist,

u a

ve

w' That s what he swore Two weeks ago he went He left me letter Dagny I can t tell what I'll do when I see it—hatever it was that they saw when they went'

It seemed to her that some destroyer was moving soundlessly rough the country and the lights were dying at his touch—someone e thought bitterly, who had reversed the principle of the Twentieth entury motor and was now turning kinetic energy into static.

That was the enemy—she thought, as she sat at her desk in the athering twilight—with whom she was running a race The monthly port from Quentin Daniels lay on her desk She could not be rtain, as yet, that Daniels would solve the secret of the motor but e destroyer, she thought, was moving swiftly surely at an ever ccelerating tempo, she wondered whether, by the time she rebuilt e motor, there would be any world left to use it

...ouuit. He seems to have forgotten it Well I ll just say that 'Governmental scientific inquiry' is a contradiction in terms"

She asked him what position he held at the Utah Institute of Technology "Night watchman, he answered *What?* she gasped. "Night watchman," he repeated politely, as if she had not caught the words as if there were no cause for astonishment

Under her questioning he explained that he did not like any

the scientific foundations left in existence that he would have like a job in the research laboratory of some big industrial concern—"But which one of them can afford to undertake any long-range work nowadays and why should they?"—so when the Utah Institute of Technology was closed for lack of funds he had remained there as night watchman and sole inhabitant of the place the sa ar was sufficient to pay for his needs—and the Institute s laborator was there intact for his own private undisturbed use

So you re doing research work of your own?"

That s right

For what purpose?

For my own pleasure

"What do you intend to do if you discover something of scientifi importance or commercial value? Do you intend to put it to som public use?

"I don t know I don t think so "

Haven t you any desire to be of service to humanity?

I don t talk that kind of language Miss Taggart I don t th n you do either

She laughed I think we ll get along together you and I"

"We will

When she had told him the story of the motor, when he ha studied the manuscript he made no comment but merely said tha he would take the job on any terms she named

She asked him to choose his own terms She protested in as ton shment, against the low monthly salary he quoted Miss Ta gart he said if there s something that I won t take it s someth n for nothing I don t know how long you might have to pay me c whether you ll get anything at all in return I ll gamble on my ow mind I won t let anybody else do it I don't collect for an intention But I sure do intend to collect for goods delivered If I succee that s when I'll skin you alive because what I want then is a pe centage and it s going to be high but it s going to be worth you while "

When he named the percentage he wanted she laughed "That i skinning me alive and it *will* be worth my while Okay

They agreed that it was to be her private project and that he wa to be her private employee neither of them wanted to have to de with the interference of the Taggart Research Department He aske to remain in Utah in his post of watchman where he had all th laboratory equipment and all the privacy he needed The project wa to remain confidential between them until and unless he succeede

"Miss Taggart he said in conclusion "I don t know how man years it will take me to solve this if ever But I know that if I spen the rest of my life on it and succeed I will die satisfied " He added "There s only one thing that I want more than to solve it it s t meet the man who has "

Once a month since his return to Utah she had sent him a chec and he had sent her a report on his work It was too early to hope but his reports were the only bright points in the stagnant fog c days in the office

The calen-
he city had
of Rearden.
ld see him
ight.

plaining her absence afterwards.

She was hurrying across the concourse of the Terminal when she heard a voice calling, "Miss Taggart!" with a strange note of urgency and reluctance, together It stopped her abruptly, she took a few seconds to realize that it was the old man at the cigar stand who had called.

"I've been waiting to catch sight of you for days, Miss Taggart
e been extremely anxious to speak to you " There was an odd
htened
I out of

llar sign
at you gave me some months ago—where did you get it?"

She stood still for a moment "I'm afraid that's a long, complicated story," she answered

"Have you any way of getting in touch with the person who gave to you?"

"I suppose so—though I'm not too sure Why?"

"Would he tell you where he got it?"

"I don't know What makes you suspect that he wouldn't?"

He hesitated, then asked, "Miss Taggart, what do you do when ou have to tell someone something which you know to be impossible?"

She chuckled "The man who gave me the cigarette said that in uch a case one

ave to tell me?"
I have checked
every source of information in and about the tobacco industry I have had that cigarette stub put through a chemical analysis There s no plant that manufactures that kind of paper The flavoring elements in that tobacco have never been used in any smoking mixture I could find That cigarette was machine made, but it was not made n any factory I know—and I know them all Miss Taggart, to the best of my knowledge, that cigarette was not made anywhere on earth."

* *

Rearden stood by, watching absently, while the waiter wheeled the dinner table out of his hotel room Ken Danagger had left The room was half-dark, by an unspoken agreement, they had kept

lights low during their dinner, so that Danagger's face would not be noticed and perhaps, recognized by the waiters

They had had to meet furtively, like criminals who could not be seen together They could not meet in their offices or in their homes, only in the crowded anonymity of a city, in his suite at the Wayne-Falkland Hotel There could be a fine of $10 000 and ten years of imprisonment for each of them, if it became known that he had agreed to deliver to Danagger four thousand tons of structural shapes of Rearden Metal

They had not discussed that law, at their dinner together, or their motives or the risk they were taking They had merely talked business Speaking clearly and dryly, as he always spoke at any conference, Danagger had explained that I

sufficient to brace such tunnels

bracing much longer and to

federated Coal Company

three w

they ha

sion, fo

some in

coal is

also yelling that the coal operators are profiteering in the oil shortage One gang in Washington is yelling that I am expanding too much and

coming

am not

governr

unwilling to satisfy the public's need of fuel At my present rate of profit, *this Confederated Coal property will bring back the money I spent on it*—in forty seven years I have no children I bought it because there's one customer I don t dare leave without coal—and thats *Taggart* Transcontinental I keep thinking of what would happen if the railroads collapsed" He had stopped, then added, "I don t know *why I still* care about that, but I do Those people in Washington don't seem to have a clear picture of what that would be like I *have*" *Rearden* had said, "I'll deliver the Metal When you need the other half of your order, let me know I'll deliver that, too"

At the *end of the* dinner, Danagger had said in the same precise impassive tone the tone of a man who ... the exact meaning of his words, 'If any em

tempts private blackm

pay, if he has friends

then I go to jail" "Th

jail—if this dinner was a felony—meant no more to him than the possibility of being run over by a truck an ugly physical accident

r business transaction he had enjoyed in a year's work—and that was hiding, as a guilty secret, his nights with Dagny, the only rs that kept him alive He felt that there was some connection reen the two secrets, some essential connection which he had to over He could not grasp it, he could not find the words to name out he felt that the day when he would find them, he would

ost hating it, because tomorrow morning seemed so close and he would have to leave her—he wondered whether he could main in town tomorrow, or whether he should leave now, without ng her, so that he could wait, so that he could always have it ad of him the moment of closing his hands over her shoulders looking down at her face You're going insane, he thought—he knew that if she were beside him through every hour of his s it would still be the same, he would never have enough of it, would have to invent some senseless form of torture for himself order to bear it—he knew he would see her tonight, and the

hair over his arm, her eyes closed, the face drawn as in a look pain, her mouth open to him

le stood at the wall, waiting, to let all the events of the day drop ay from him, to feel free, to know that the next span of time s his

When the door of his room flew open without warning he did not te hear or believe it, at first He saw the silhouette of a woman, n of a bellboy who put down a suitcase and vanished The voice heard was Lillian's "Why, Henry! All alone and in the dark?"

She pressed a light switch by the door She stood there, fastidi-ly groomed, wearing a pale beige traveling suit that looked as if had traveled under glass; she was smiling and pulling her gloves with the air of having reached home

'Are you in for the evening, dear?" she asked 'Or were you ng out?"

He did not know how long a time passed before he answered, hat are you doing here?"

'Why, don't you remember that Jim Taggart invited us to his dding? It's tonight"

'I didn't intend to go to his wedding."

'Oh but I did!"

"Why didn't you tell me this morning before I left?"

"To surprise you, darling" She laughed gaily "It's practically im-ssible to drag you to any social function, but I thought you might

do it like this, on the spur of the moment, just to go out and have a good time, as married couples are supposed to I thought you wouldn't mind it—you've been staying overnight in New York so often!"

... under the brim of

... ou might have been

' Or were you, per- haps, intending to return home tonight?"

"No "

"Did you have an engagement for this evening?"

"No "

"Fine " She pointed at her suitcase. "I brought my evening clothes Will you bet me a corsage of orchids that I can get dressed faster than you can? '

He thought that Dagny would be at her brother's wedding tonight the evening did not matter to him any longer. "I ll take you out, i you wish," he said, but not to that wedding."

"Oh, but that s where I want to go! It's the most preposterous event of the season, and everybody's been looking forward to it fo weeks, all my friends I wouldn't miss it for the world. There isn any better show in town—nor better publicized. It's a perfectly r diculous marriage, but just about what you'd expect from Ji Taggart "

She was moving casually through the room, glancing around, as getting acquainted with an unfamiliar place "I haven't been in Ne York for years," she said "Not with you, that is Not on any form occasion "

He noticed the pause in the aimless wandering of her eyes, glance that stopped briefly on a filled ashtray and moved on He f ...

think I ll worry about it, because if it's a person who's always av able on call, without appointment—well, everybody knows what s of a person *that* is "

He thought that he would have to be careful, he had been ab to slap her face "Lillian, I think you know," he said, "that hu ...

... etting it. Yo

... ie She had

strange, pleading look which he had seen in her face at time

that seemed made of sincerity and courage
'ou prefer to be serious, Henry? All right How long do you
me to exist somewhere in the basement of your life? How
ly do you want me to become? I've asked nothing of you I've
'ou live your life as you pleased Can't you give me one evening?
I know you hate parties and you'll be bored But it means a

on, but thats the form of any woman's happiness You dont live
such standards, but I do Can't you give me this much, at the
e of a few hours of boredom? Cant you be strong enough to
ill your obligation and to perform a husband's duty? Can't you
there, not for your own sake, but mine, not because *you* want to
but only because *I* want it?"
Dagny—he thought desperately—Dagny, who had never said a

on the splintered floor
usly, step-
e wall She
y times in
tude when
shed they
not do it so often.
An aging sob sister, who had a drippy love column in print and the
Cherryl under

the reporters out, had slapped
Cherryl's door in their faces and had
ng, she had

lippers
d
the strand of pearls at
had cost

price of the entire contents of Cherryl's room A bed took most of the room's space, and the rest was taken by a chest of drawers, one chair, and her few dresses hanging behind a faded curtain. The huge hoop skirt of the wedding gown brushed against the walls when she moved, her slender figure swaying above the skirt in the dramatic contrast of a tight, severe, long sleeved bodice; the gown had been made by the best designer in the city.

"You see, when I got the job in the dime store, I could have moved to a better room," she said to the sob sister, in apology, "but I don t think it matters much where you sleep at night, so I saved my money, because I ll need it for something important in the future—' She stopped and smiled, shaking her head dazedly. "I thought I'd need it," she said

"You look fine,' said the sob sister. "You can't see much in that alleged mirror, but you re okay."

to catch up

it, that

this He

doesn't hold it against me "

"Uh huh,' said the sob sister; her face looked grim

Cherryl remembered the wonder of the first time Jim Taggart had come here He had come one evening, without warning, a month after their first meeting, when she had given up hope of ever seeing him again She had been miserably embarrassed, she had felt as if she were trying to hold a sunrise within the space of a mud puddle—

at her flushed fa

She had not known what he thought But he had known that she stunned, not by the place, but by his bringing her there, that sl

not as boo

Jim!"

Had he wished, she would have given him the only kind of payn

believe me, those people? I had to grant the unions demands to down the trains—and the moratorium on bonds was the only I could do it, so that s why Wesley gave it to me, for the workers, or myself All the newspapers said that I was a great example for businessmen to follow—a businessman with a sense of social re-

… me that way—she and Rearden and all those people! Why are so sure they're right? If I acknowledge their superiority in material realm, why don't they acknowledge mine in the spiritual? y have the brain, but I have the heart They have the capacity to duce wealth, but I have the capacity to love Isn't mine the greater … ugh all the … Why … and I m not … what exactly why they should bow to me, because I m not? uldn t that be an act of true humanity? It takes no kindness to pect a man who deserves respect—it s only a payment which he's ned. To give an unearned respect is the supreme gesture of charity But they're not human They feel concern for anyone's need or weakness No concern … no pity . . ."

She could understand little of it, but she understood that he was un-

… only way to be worthy of him, she thought, was never to ask n for anything He offered her money once, and she refused it, with h a bright, painful flare of anger in her eyes that he did not empt it again. The anger was at herself she wondered whether

had done som

ur
co
ba
st
sta
m

wore the bracelet with her shabby black dress

He made her wear that bracelet again, on the night when he too her to a party, a great reception given by Mrs Cornelius Pope If t considered her good enough to bring into the home of his friends, sl thought—the illustrious friends whose names she had seen on t inaccessible mountain peaks that were the society columns of t

the courageous trust of a kitten when it sees a hand extended people gathered to have a good time would not hurt anyone, thought

At the end of an hour, her attempt to smile had become a helpl bewildered plea Then the smile went, as she watched the pe around her She saw that the trim, confident girls had a nasty lence of manner when they spoke to Jim, as if they did not res him and never had One of them in particular, a Betty Pope, daughter of the hostess, kept making remarks to him which Che could not understand, because she could not believe that she un stood them correctly

No one had paid any attention to her, at first, except for a astonished glances at her gown After a while, she saw them loo at her She heard an elderly woman ask Jim, in the anxious ton referring to some distinguished family she had missed knowing,

She tried to get out of the way, out of their notice. As she sl

along the edge of the room, she heard some man say, with a ig, "Well, Jim Taggart is one of the most powerful men in Washon at the moment." He did not say it respectfully

he looked at the lone straight shaft of the Taggart Building rising he distance—and then she thought that she understood these peohated Jim because they envied him Whatever they were, she

aped in Buffalo, he was as lonely as she had always been, and the

us man defying their opinion, and she was willing to match his rage by serving as the scarecrow of the occasion

But she was glad when it was over, when she sat beside him in his

On the stoop of her rooming house, she said to him forlornly, "I'm ry if I let you down ."

He did not answer for a moment, and then he asked, "What would

swered, "I guess I I haven't any sense of humor"

"This is a proposal, my dear"

anted it to happen

Jim's arm around her—she giggled with delight and wondered proudly whether every person in the city had seen it After a while the delight vanished

They kept photographing her at the dime store counter, in the sub[illegible]

tures of Jim at his desk, in the concourse of the Taggart Terminal, on the steps of his private railway car, at a formal banquet in Washington The huge spreads of full newspaper pages, the articles in magazines, the radio voices the newsreels, all were a single long sustained scream—about the "Cinderella Girl" and the "Democratic Businessman"

She told herself not to be suspicious, when she felt uneasy; she told herself not to be ungrateful, when she felt hurt She felt it only in a few rare moments when she awakened in the middle of the night and lay in the silence of her room, unable to sleep She knew that it would take her years to recover, to believe, to understand She was reeling through her days like a person with a sunstroke, seeing nothing but the figure of Jim Taggart as she had seen him first on the night of his great triumph

"Listen, kid" the sob sister said to her, when she stood in her room for the last time, the lace of the wedding veil streaming like crystal foam from her hair to the blotched planks of the floor "You think that if one gets hurt in life, it s through one s own sins—and that's true in the long run But there are people who'll try to hurt you through the good they see in you—knowing that it's the good needing it and punishing you for it Don't let it break you when you discover that"

"I don t think I'm afraid," she said, looking intently straight before her, the radiance of her smile melting the earnestness of her glance "I have no right to be afraid of anything. I m too happy You see I always thought that there wasn't [illegible] that all you ca[illegible]
and giv[illegible]
and ver[illegible]
so soor[illegible]

* *

"Money is the root of all evil," said James Taggart "Money can't buy happiness Love will conquer any barrier and any social distance That ma[illegible]

y made everything real to her She smiled and whispered, ıng "I I m very happy ."

t opposite ends of the ballroom, Orren Boyle who seemed too : for his full-dress clothes, and Bertram Scudder, who seemed meager for his, surveyed the crowd of guests with the same ght, though neither of them admitted that he was thinking Orren Boyle half told himself that he was looking for the faces riends, and Bertram Scudder suggested to himself that he was ering material for an article. But both, unknown to each other, drawing a mental chart of the faces they saw, classifying them r two headings which, if named, would have read "Favor" "Fear" There were men whose presence signified a special ection extended to James Taggart, and men whose presence essed a desire to avoid his hostility—those who represented nd lowered to pull him up and those who represented a back t to let him climb By the unwritten code of the day, nobody ived or accepted an invitation from a man of public prom ce except in token of one or the other of these motives Those he first group were, for the most part, youthful they had come n Washington. Those in the second group were older, they e businessmen.

Orren Boyle and Bertram Scudder were men who used words public instrument, to be avoided in the privacy of one s own d. Words were a commitment, carrying implications which they not wish to face They needed no words for their chart, the sification was done by physical means a respectful movement their eyebrows equivalent to the emotion of the word "So!" the first group—and a sarcastic movement of their lips equiva : to the emotion of 'Well well!' for the second One face w up the smooth working of their calculating mechanisms for moment when they saw the cold blue eyes and blond hair of nk Rearden, their muscles tore at the register of the second up in the equivalent of "Oh boy!" The sum of the chart was estimate of James Taggart s power It added up to an impressive al

They knew that James Taggart was fully aware of it when they w him moving among his guests He walked briskly in a Morse le pattern of short dashes and brief stops with a manner of nt irritation, as if conscious of the number of people whom displeasure might worry The hint of a smile on his face had a vor of gloating—as if he knew that the act of coming to honor n was an act that disgraced the men who had come as if he ew and enjoyed it.

A tail of figures kept trailing and shifting behind him as if their iction were to give h m the pleas re of ignor ng them Mr Mowen

Taggart s eyes swept over the crowd once in a while swiftly and rtively, in the manner of a prowler's flashlight, this, in the muscu

lar shorthand leg ble to Orren Boyle meant that Taggart was look ing for someone and did not want anyone to know it. The search ended when Eugene Lawson came to shake Taggart s hand and to say his wet lower lip twisting like a cushion to soften the blow "Mr Mouch couldn t come Jim Mr Mouch is so sorry, he had a special plane chartered but at the last minute things came up, crucial national problems you know" Taggart stood still d d not answer and frowned

Orren Boyle burst out laughing Taggart turned to him so sharply that the others melted away without waiting for a command to vanish.

"What do you think you re doing?" snapped Taggart.

"Having a good time Jimmy just having a good time" said Boyle Wesley is *your* boy wasn t he?

"I know somebody who s my boy and he d better not forget it."

Who? Larkin? Well no I don t think you re talking about Larkin. And if it s not Larkin that you re talking about why then I think you ought to be careful in your use of the possessive pronouns I don t mind the age classification I know I look young for my years but I m just allergic to pronouns"

"That s very smart but you re going to get too smart one of these days"

"If I do you ju st go ahead and make the most of it Jimmy If"

"The trouble with people who overreach themselves is that they have short memories You d better remember who got Rearden Metal choked off the market for you

"Why I remember who promised to That was the party who then pulled every string he could lay his hands on to try to prevent that particular directive from be ng issued because he figured he might need rail of Rearden Metal in the future

Because *you* spent ten thousand dollars pouring liquor into people you hoped would prevent the directive about the bond moratorium!"

"That s right So I d d I had friends who had railroad bonds. And bes des I h . . . —my Well your . . . nine beat yours . . . hat the hell'— . . . around only don t you try to fool *me* Jimmy Save the act for the suckers"

"If you don t believe that I've always tried to do my best for you—"

Sure you have The best that could be expected all things considered And . . . got somebody . . . ited to remind . . . tends that money

"Wi . . .

"Just what you re thinking The ones you buy aren t really worth a damn because somebody can always offer them more so the fi ld s wide open to anybody and it s just like old fashioned competition again. But if you get the goods on a man then you ve got him then

ere's no higher bidder and you can count on his friendship Well, ou have friends, and so have I You have friends I can use, and ce versa. That's all right with me—what the hell!—one's got to ade something If we don't trade money—and the age of money past—then we trade men."

"What is it you're driving at?"

"Why, I'm just telling you a few things that you ought to remember Now take Wesley, for instance You promised him the ssistant's job in the Bureau of National Planning—for double-rossing Rearden, at the time of the Equalization of Opportunity ill. You had the connections to do it, and that's what I asked you to o—in exchange for the Anti-dog-eat-dog Rule, where I had the onnections So Wesley did his part, and you saw to it that you ot it all on paper—oh sure, I know that you've got written proof f the kind of deals he pulled to help pass that bill, while he was aking Rearden's money to defeat it and keeping Rearden off uard They were pretty ugly deals It would be pretty messy for Mr Mouch, if it all came out in public So you kept your promise and you got the job for him, because you thought you had him And so you did And he paid off pretty handsomely didn't he? But it works only just so long After a while Mr Wesley Mouch might get to be so powerful and the scandal so old, that nobody will care how he got his start or whom he double-crossed Nothing lasts forever Wesley was Rearden's man, and then he was your man, and he might be somebody else's man tomorrow"

"Are you giving me a hint?"

"Why no, I'm giving you a friendly warning We're old friends, Jimmy, and I think that that's what we ought to remain I think we can be very useful to each other, you and I if you don't start getting the wrong ideas about friendship Me—I believe in a balance of power"

"Did *you* prevent Mouch from coming here tonight?"

"Well maybe I did and maybe I didn't I'll let you worry about it. That's good for me if I did—and still better if I didn't."

Cherryl's eyes followed James Taggart through the crowd The faces that kept shifting and gathering around her seemed so friendly and their voices were so eagerly warm that she felt certain there was no malice anywhere in the room She wondered why some of them talked to her about Washington, in a hopeful confidential manner of half sentences, half hints, as if they were seeking her help for something secret she was supposed to understand She did not know what to say, but she smiled and answered whatever she pleased. She could not disgrace the person of "Mrs Taggart" by any touch of fear

Then she saw the enemy It was a tall slender figure in a gray evening gown, who was now her sister in law

The pressure of anger in Cherryl's mind was the stored accumulation of the sounds of Jim's tortured voice She felt the nagging pull of a duty left undone Her eyes kept returning to the enemy and studying her intently The pictures of Dagny Taggart in the newspapers had shown a figure dressed in slacks, or a face with

slanting hat brim and a raised coat collar Now she wore a gray evening gown that seemed indecent, because it looked austerely modest, so modest that it vanished from one's awareness and left one too aware of the slender body it pretended to cover. There was a tone of blue in the gray cloth that went with the gun-metal gray of her eyes She wore no jewelry, only a bracelet on her wrist, a chain of heavy metal links with a green blue cast.

Cherryl waited until she saw Dagny standing alone, then tore forward, cutting resolutely across the room She looked at close range into the gun metal eyes that seemed cold and intense at once, the eyes that looked at her directly with a polite, impersonal curiosity.

"There's something I want you to know," said Cherryl, her voice taut and harsh, "so that there won't be any pretending about it. I'm not going to put on the sweet relative act I know what you've done to Jim and how you ve made him miserable all his life I'm going to [illegible] Mrs Taggart.

[illegible]

ment

Rearden stood by Lillian's side and followed her when she moved. She wished to be seen with her husband, he was complying He did not know whether anyone looked at him or not, he was aware of no one around them, except the person whom he could not permit himself to see

The image still holding his consciousness was the moment when he had entered this room with Lillian and had seen Dagny looking at them He had looked straight at her, prepared to accept any blow her eyes would choose to give him Whatever the consequences to Lillian, he would have confessed his adultery publicly, there and in that moment, rather than commit the unspeakable act of evading Dagny's eyes, of closing his face into a coward s blankness, of pretending to her that he did not know the nature of his action.

But there had been no blow He knew every shade of sensation ever reflected in Dagny's face, he had known that she had felt no shock, he had seen nothing but an untouched serenity Her eyes had moved to his [illegible]

[illegible] steps, revealed to them as simply and openly as the gray dress revealed her body

She had bowed to them, the courteous movement of her head including them both He had answered, he had seen Lillian's brief nod, and then he had seen Lillian moving away and realized that he had stood with his head bowed for a long moment

He did not know what Lillian's friends were saying to him or

at he was answering. As a man goes step by step, trying not to nk of the length of a hopeless road, so he went moment by ment, keeping no imprint of anything in his mind. He heard ubes of Lillian's pleased laughter and a tone of satisfaction in r voice.

After a while, he noticed the women around him; they all seemed resemble Lillian, with the same look of static grooming, with thin [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the happiness of feminine [illegible]. This, then—he thought—was the happiness of feminine amity which she had begged him to give her, these were the standards which he did not live by, but had to consider. He turned or escape to a group of men.

He could not find a single straight statement in the conversation of the men; whatever subject they seemed to be talking about never seemed to be the subject they were actually discussing. He listened like a foreigner who recognized some of the words, but could not connect them into sentences. A young man, with a look of alcoholic insolence, staggered past the group and snapped, chuckling, "Learned your lesson, Rearden?" He did not know what the young man had meant; but everybody else seemed to know it, they looked shocked and secretly pleased.

Lillian drifted away from him, as if letting him understand that she [illegible] to a [illegible] the [illegible] Dagny [illegible] soft [illegible] when she walked, the momentary pauses sculptured by the cloth, the shadows and the light. He saw it as a bluish gray smoke held shaped for an instant into a long curve that slanted forward to her knee and back to the tip of her sandal. He knew every facet the light would shape if the smoke were ripped away.

He felt a murky, twisting [illegible] jealousy of every man who [illegible] where [illegible] ment's [illegible] he was [illegible] ys and [illegible] wiped [illegible] n exists [illegible] e stood [illegible] waste a here, he wondered who had the right to demand the single irreplaceable hour of his life, when his only desire was to seize the slender figure in gray and hold her through the length of whatever time there was left for him to exist.

In the next moment, he felt the shudder of recapturing his mind. He felt the tight, contemptuous movement of his lips pressed together in token of the words he cried to himself: You made a contract once, now stick to it. And then he thought sudden[illegible] business transactions the courts of law did not recognize

wherein no valuable consideration had been given by one party to the other He wondered what made him think of it. The thought seemed irrelevant He did not pursue it

James Taggart saw Lillian Rearden drift casually toward him at the one moment when he chanced to be alone in the dim corner between a potted palm and a window He stopped and waited to let her approach He could not guess her purpose, but this was the manner which in the code he understood meant that he had better hear her

How do you like my wedding gift, Jim? she asked and laughed at his look of embarrassment "No no, don't try to go over the list of things in your apartment wondering which one the hell it was. It s not in your apartment, it s right here and it s a non material gift darling

He saw the half hint of a smile on her face the look understood among his friends as an invitation to share a secret victory it was the look not of having outthought but of having outsmarted somebody He answered cautiously with a safely pleasant smile "Your presence is the best gift you could give me"

My presence Jim?

The lines of his face were shock bound for a moment. He knew what she meant but he had not expected her to mean it

She smiled openly We both know whose presence is the most valuable one for you tonight—and the unexpected one Didn't you really think of giving me credit for it? I m surprised at you I thought you had a genius for recognizing potential friends

H· [illegible] ·f lly neutral

"H [illegible]

" [illegible] on didn't

exp [illegible] afra d of

you [illegible] quite an

inestimable advantage isn t it?'

I m [illegible] surprised Lillian"

"Shouldn t you say impressed? Your guests are quite impressed I can practically hear them thinking all over the room Most of them are thinking *If he has to seek terms with Jim Taggart we d better toe the line'* And a few are thinking *If he's afraid we ll get away with much more'* This is as you want it, of course—and I wouldn t think of spoiling your triumph—but you and I are the only ones who know that you didn t achieve it single-handed

He did not smile he asked his face blank his voice smooth but with a carefully measured hint of harshness "What s your angle?"

She laughed "Essentially—the same as yours Jim But speaking practically—none at all It s just a favor I've done you and I need no favor in return Don t worry I m not lobbying for any special interests I m not after squeezing some particular directives out of Mr Mouch I m not even after a d amond tiara from you Unless of course it s a tiara of a non material order such as your appreciation"

He looked straight at her for the first time his eyes narrowed his

e relaxed to the same half smile as hers suggest ng the expres n which, for both of them meant that they felt at home with each ier an expression of contempt "You know that I have always

nen"

of mockery

e

rgive me if I think

nds he said with

angle you contem

—or losses—which

She shrugged From the angle of a horsewoman darling. If you id the most powerful horse in the world, you would keep it bridled own to the gait required to carry you in comfort even though this eant the sacrifice of its full capacity even though its top speed ould never be seen and its great power would be wasted You ould do it—because if you let the horse go full blast it would row you off in no time However financial aspects are not y chief concern—nor yours Jim"

"I did underestimate you" he said slowly

"Oh

f

t

o

low is that I can deliver *him* any time I choose You may act ccordingly"

In the code of his friends to reveal any part of one s self was to ve a weapon to an enemy—but he s gned her confess on and latched it when he said I wish I were as smart about my sister

She looked at him without astonishment she did not find the ords irrelevant "Yes *there s* a tough one she said No vulnerable oint? No weaknesses?"

"None"

"No love affairs?

"God, no!"

She ... Taggart was

ourt."

"Lill an you re wonderful!" he said quite spontaneously

She laughed "That my dear is the non material t ara I wanted"

The remnant of a smile stayed on her face as she moved through the crowd a fluid smile that ran softly into the look of tens on and boredom worn by all the faces around her She moved at random enjoy ng the sense of being seen her eggshell sat n gown shimmering like heavy cream with the motion of her tall figure

It was the green blue spark that caught her attention it flashed

an instant under the lights, on the wrist of a thin, naked arm Th
she saw the slender body, the gray dress, the fragile, naked shoul
ders She stopped She looked at the bracelet, frowning

Dagny turned at her approach Among the many things that Lil
lian resented, the impersonal politeness of Dagny's face was the one
she resented most

"What do you think of your brother's marriage, Miss Taggart?"
she asked casually, smiling

"I have no opinion about it"

"Do you mean to say that you don't find it worthy of any
thought?"

"If you wish to be exact—yes, that's what I mean"

"Oh, but don't you see any human significance in it?"

"No"

"Don't you think that a person such as your brother's bride does
deserve some interest?"

"Why, no"

"I envy you Miss Taggart I envy your Olympian detachment. I
is, I think, the secret of why lesser mortals can never hope to equa
your success in the field of business They allow their attention to b
divided—at least to the extent of acknowledging achievements i
other fields"

"What achievements are we talking about?"

"Don't you grant any recognition at all to the women who attai
unusual heights of conquest, not in the industrial, but in the huma
realm?"

"I don't think that there is such a word as 'conquest'—in th
human realm"

"Oh, but consider, for instance, how hard other women woul
have had to work—if work were the only means available to the
—to achieve what this girl has achieved through the person of you
brother"

"I don't think she knows the exact nature of what she h
achieved"

Rearden saw them together He approached He felt that he h
to hear it, no matter what the consequences He stopped silent
beside them He did not know whether Lillian was aware of t
presence, he knew that Dagny was

"Do show a little generosity toward her, Miss Taggart," sa
Lillian. "At least, the generosity of attention. You must not desp
the women who do not possess your brilliant talent but who exerc
their own particular endowments Nature always balances her g
and offers compensations—don't you think so?"

"I'm not sure I understand you"

"Oh, I [illegible] more explici

[illegible]

not care to speak more clearly, but she saw Rearden looking at h
She smiled and said, "Well, consider your sister in law, Miss T

art. What chance did she have to rise in the world? None—by our exacting standards She could not have made a successful

ared to compete with us lesser women in the sole field of our

n

I haven t"

"I would like to

and fully devoid

of human frailties I would like to believe that you ve never felt the desire to flatter—or to offend—anyone But I see that you expected both Henry and me to be here tonight"

"Why, no, I can t say that I did, I had not seen my brother s guest list."

"Then why are you wearing that bracelet?'

Dagny s eyes moved deliberately straight to hers I always wear it"

"Don t you think that that s carrying a joke too far?

"It was never a joke Mrs Rearden

"Anything you wish"

"What is your motive?"

"You knew my motive when you gave me the bracelet"

Lillian glanced at Rearden His face was expressionless she saw no reaction no hint of intention to help her or stop her nothing but an attentiveness that made her feel as if she were standing in a spot light.

Her

ing su

again

impro

"No"

"But surely you know that you are taking a dangerous and ugly risk"

"No"

"You do not take into consideration the possibility of being . . . misunderstood?"

"No"

Lillian

Taggart don t

by a statement of that kind"

"I mean that your attitude may be highly idealistic—as I am sure it is—but, unfortunately, most people do not share your lofty frame of mind and will misinterpret your action in the one manner which would be most abhorrent to you."

"Then the responsibility and the risk will be theirs, not mine."

"I admire your ... no, I must not say 'innocence,' but shall I say 'purity'? You have never thought of it, I'm sure, but life is not as straight and logical as . . . as a railroad track. It is regrettable, but possible, that your high intentions may lead people to suspect things which ... well, which I'm sure you know to be of a sordid and scandalous nature."

Dagny was looking straight at her. "I don't."

"But you cannot ignore that possibility."

"I do." Dagn...

noth-
...dless—
...ld you

...e permits you to gamble with your reputation, ... ignore the danger to Mr. Rearden?"

Dagny asked slowly, "What is the danger to Mr. Rearden?"

"I'm sure you understand me."

"I don't."

"Oh, but surely it isn't necessary to be more explicit."

"It is—if you wish to continue this discussion."

Lillian's eyes went to Rearden's face, searching for some sign to help her decide whether to continue or to stop. He would not help her.

"Miss Taggart," she said, "I am not your equal in philosophical altitude. I am only an average wife. Please give me that bracelet—... at yo...

... hoos...

"Certainly not!" The ... and of nam... and t... of a... nerve... a reluctant admission of her actual opinion. "That would be u...

...arde... ...o of ...fac...

Dagny saw torture

"It isn't necessary, Hank," she said.

"It is—for me," he answered coldly, not looking at her; he w... looking at Lillian in the manner of a command that could not be disobeyed.

Lillian ...

Dagny stood still her eyes closed, she was thinking of the night hen Lillian had given her the bracelet. He had taken his wife s de, then he had taken hers, now Of the three of them, she was e only one who understood fully what this meant

"Whatever is the worst you may wish to say to me, you will be ght."

She heard him and opened her eyes He was looking at her coldly, s face harsh, allowing no sign of pain or apology to suggest a hope f forgiveness

"Dearest don't torture yourself like that" she said "I knew that ou re married I ve never tried to evade that knowledge I m not urt by it tonight"

Her first

She saw the anger in his face—the rebellion against pity—the look f saying to her contemptuously that he had betrayed no torture nd needed

waiter, as if the waiter were guilty of an unpardonable lapse Then ubank completed his sentence

You really liked it?

Orren Boyle glanced at the group on his way across the room, but did not stop The glance was sufficient to give him an estimate of the nature of the group s concerns Fair enough he thought, one s got to trade something He knew, but did not care to name just what was being traded

"We are at the dawn of a new age" said James Taggart, from above the rim of his champagne glass "We are breaking up the vicious tyranny of economic power We will set men free of the rul

of the dollar We will release our spiritual aims from dependence o

tan His smile suggested a summer morning The way he wore h formal clothes made the rest of the crowd look as if they we masquerading in borrowed costumes

"What's the matter? he asked in the midst of their silence "D I say something that somebody here didn't know?"

st thing James Taggart fou

there, then by elevator fro

is—"

New York and he

it would I? You'

"I'm delighted to see you, of course," Taggart said cautious then added belligerently to balance it "But if you think you're go to—"

F

slide

"So I do shall I tell you what I think?

"This is hardly the moment for any—"

"I think you should present me to your bride James Your m ners have never been glued to you too solidly—you always l them in an emergency, and that's the time when one needs th most"

Turning to escort him toward Cherryl, Taggart caught the fa sound that came from Bertram Scudder, it was an unborn chuck Taggart knew that the men who had crawled at his feet a mom ago, whose hatred for Francisco d'Anconia was perhaps grea than his own, were enjoying the spectacle none the less The im cations of this knowledge were among the things he did not c to name

Francisco bowed to Cherryl and offered his best wishes, as if were the bride of a royal heir Watching nervously, Taggart relief—and a touch of nameless resentment, which if named wo have told him he wished the occasion deserved the grandeur t Francisco's manner gave it for a moment.

He was afraid to remain by Francisco's side and afraid to let h loose among the guests He backed a few tentative steps away, Francisco followed him smiling.

"You didn't think I'd want to miss your wedding James—w

ou're my childhood friend and best stockholder?"

"What?" gasped Taggart, and regretted it the sound was a confession of panic.

'One reason is that a man doesn't want people to know he's rich. Another is that he doesn't want them to learn how he got that way."

people would not gather around them "You have been doing extremely well," he said, in the safe tone of a business compliment

"Yes, haven't I? It's wonderful how the stock of d'Anconia Copper has risen within the last year. But I don't think I should be too conceited about it—there's not much competition left in the world.

have decided that it's the best place for your hidden money, that it can't be beaten, that it would take a most unusual kind of man to destroy d'Anconia Copper—you were right"

"Well, I hear it said that you've begun to take your responsibilities seriously and that you've settled down to business at last. They say you've been working very hard"

"I suppose" said Taggart, in the cautious tone of an indirect question, "that I should feel flattered you chose to come to this party"

"Oh but I had to come I thought you were expecting me."

"Why, no, I wasn t that is, I mean—"

"You should have expected me, James. This is the great, formal nose-counting event, where the victims come in order to show how safe it is to destroy them, and the destroyers form pacts of eternal friendship, which lasts for three months I don't know exactly which group I belong to but I had to come and be counted, didn t I?"

'What in hell do you think you're saying?" Taggart cried furiously, seeing the tension on the faces around them

"Be careful, James If you try to pretend that you don't understand me, I'm going to make it much clearer."

'If you think it s proper to utter such—"

"I think it s funny There was a time when men were afraid that somebody would reveal some secret of theirs that was unknown to their fellows Nowadays, they re afraid that somebody will name what everybody knows [illegible] thought that that s all it [illegible] with all you [illegible] of what you [illegible]

"If you think it s proper to come to a celebration such as a wedding in order to insult the host—"

'Why, James I came here to thank you."

"To thank me?"

"Of course You've done me a great favor—you and your boys in Washington and the boys in Santiago Only I wonder why none of *you took* the trouble to inform me about it. Those directives that [illegible] determined by any considerations such as you're intimating or—"

"I know how they re determined, James I know that the deal *started* with the boys in Santiago, because they've been on the d Anconia pay roll for centuries—well, no, 'pay roll' is an honorable word, it would be more exact to say that d Anconia Copper has been paying them protection money for centuries—isn't that what *your gangsters* call it? Our boys in Santiago call it taxes. They've been getting their cut on every ton of d'Anconia copper sold. So they have a vested interest to see me sell as many tons as possible But with the world turning into People's States, this is the only country left where [illegible] do it—but I know that you came in on it somewhere, because you

do hold a sizable chunk of d'Anconia Copper stock And it surely ldn't displease you—that morning four months ago, the day after le directives were issued—to see the kind of soaring leap that Anconia Copper performed on the Stock Exchange Why, it ractically leaped off the ticker tape and into your face'

"Who gave you any grounds to invent an outrageous story of this ind?"

"Nobody I knew nothing about it. I just saw the leap on the cker tape [illegible]

"Why don't you wish to take any credit for it, James? That's out character and out of the policy at which you're such an expert. [illegible]

asn't consulted, I wasn t informed I wasn't thought about, every ung was arranged without me—and all I have to do now is proce the copper That was a great favor, James—and you may be re that I will repay it."

Francisco turned abruptly, not waiting for an answer and started way Taggart did not follow he stood, feeling that anything was eferable to one more minute of their conversation

Francisco stopped when he came to Dagny He looked at her for silent instant, without greeting his smile acknowledging that she ad been the first person he saw and the first one to see him at his ntrance into the ballroom

Against every doubt and warning in her mind she felt nothing [illegible]

She felt her lips trembling and tightening at once as she an wered, "I'm sorry if I show that I'm still open to be hurt It houldn't shock me that you've come to the stage where you despise chievement."

"Yes, don t I? I despise that Line so much that I didn't want to e it reach the kind of end it has reached '

He saw her look of sudden attentiveness the look of thought ushing into a breach torn open upon a new direction He watched er for a moment, as if he knew every step she would find hat road, then chuckled and said, "Don t you want to ask Who is John Galt?"

"Why should I want to, and why now?"

"Don't you remember that you dared him to come and claim you Line? Well, he has."

He walked on not waiting to see the look in her eyes—a look that held anger, bewilderment and the first faint gleam of a question mark

It was the muscles of his own face that made Rearden realize the nature of his reaction to Francisco's arrival he noticed suddenly that he was smiling and that his face had been relaxed into the dim well being of a smile for some minutes past, as he watched Francisco d Anconia in the crowd

He acknowledged to himself, for the first time, all the half grasped, half rejected moments when he had thought of Francisco d Anconia and thrust the thought aside before it became the knowledge of how much he wanted to see him again In moments of sudden exhaustion—at his desk, with the fires of the furnaces going down in the twilight—in the darkness of the lonely walk through the empty countryside to his house—in the silence of sleepless nights—he had found himself thinking of the only man who had once seemed to be his spokesman He had pushed the memory aside, telling himself But that one is worse than all the others!—while feeling certain that this was not true, yet being unable to name the reason of his certainty He had caught himself glancing through the newspapers to see whether Francisco d Anconia had returned to New York—and he had thrown the newspapers aside asking himself angrily What if he did return?—would you go chasing him through night clubs and cocktail parties?—what is it that you want from him?

This was what he had wanted—he thought, when he caught himself smiling at the sight of Francisco in the crowd—this strange feeling of expectation that held curiosity, amusement and hope.

Francisco did not seem to have noticed him Rearden waited, fighting a desire to approach [illegible] conversation we
had, he thought— [illegible]
with the same sm [illegible]
certain that it was [illegible]
room, toward the [illegible]

He wondered, [illegible]
to Francisco why they chose to hold him imprisoned in a clinging circle, when their resentment of him was obvious under their smiles Their faces had the hint of a look peculiar, not to fear, but to cowardice a look of guilty anger Francisco stood cornered against the side edge of a marble stairway, half leaning half-sitting on the steps, the informality of his posture, combined with the strict formality of his clothes, gave him an air of superlative elegance His was the only face that had the carefree look and the brilliant smile proper to the enjoyment of a party, but his eyes seemed intentionally expressionless, holding no trace of gaiety, showing—like a warning signal—nothing but the activity of a heightened perceptiveness.

Standing unnoticed on the edge of the group, Rearden heard a man, who had large diamond earrings and a flabby, nervous face : tensely, "Senor d Anconia, what do you think is going to happen the world?"

"Just exactly what it deserves"

'Oh, how cruel!"

'Don't you believe in the operation of the moral law, madame?" ancisco asked gravely "I do"

Rearden heard Bertram Scudder, outside the group say to a girl io made some sound of indignation "Dont let him disturb you m know, money is the root of all evil—and he s the typical duct of money"

Rearden did not think that Francisco could have heard it, but he v Francisco turning to them with a gravely courteous smile

"So yo th nk th t— [illegible]

[illegible]

u not default on that moral principle which is the root of money this what you consider evil?

"Have you ever looked for the root of production? Take a look : an electric generator and dare tell yourself that it was created by e muscular effort of unthinking brutes Try to grow a seed of heat without the knowledge left to you by men who had to dis wer it for the first time Try to obtain your food by means of noth g but physical motions—and you'll learn that man s mind is the ot of all the goods produced and of all the wealth that has ever isted on earth.

"But you say that money is made by the strong at the expense of e weak? What strength do you mean? It is not the strength of uns or muscles Wealth is the product of man s capacity to think. hen is money made by the man who invents a motor at the ex ense of those who did not invent it? Is money made by the intel- gent at the expense of the fools? By the able at the expense of the competent? By the ambitious at the expense of the lazy? Money is nade—before it can be looted or mooched—made by the effort of very honest man, each to the extent of his ability An honest man

is one who knows that he can't consume more than he has pro duced

'To trade by means of money is the code of the men of good will Money rests on the ax om th ... and his ... effort ex ... you his ... and you ... them but no more Money permits no deals except those to mutua benefit by the unforced judgment of the traders Money demand of yo the ... ir own benefi ...—the recogn ... the weight o your misery—that you must offer them values, not wounds—that th common bond among men is not the exchange of suffering bu the exchange of *goods* Money demands that you sell, not you weakness to men s stupidity but your talent to their reason it de mands that you buy not the shoddiest they offer, but the best tha your money can find And when men live by trade—with reason, no force, as their final arbiter—it is the best product that wins, the best performance the man of best judgment and highest ability— and the degree of a man s productiveness is the degree of his re ward This is the code of existence whose tool and symbol is money Is this what you consider evil?

But money is only a tool It will take you wherever you wish, but it will not replace you as the driver It will give you the means for the satisfaction of your desires but it will not provide you with desires Money is the scourge of the men who attempt to reverse the law of causality—the men who seek to replace the mind by seizing the products of the mind

'M... cep... if h... h m... ef... d. ... se... his judgment ends up by becoming the victim of his inferiors The men of intelligence desert him but the cheats and the frauds come flocking to him drawn by a law which he has not discovered that no man may be smaller than his money Is this the reason why you call it evil?

'Only the ... man who ... If an he... him But ... it? Or dic... wealth is ... not think ... the world ... tes instead of one, would not bring back the dead virtue which was the fortune Money is a living power that

without its root. Money will not serve the mind that cannot ch it. Is this the reason why you call it evil?

Money is your means of survival. The verdict you pronounce n the source of your livelihood is the verdict you pronounce

ng work you despise for purchasers you scorn? If so, then your ney will not give you a moment's or a penny's worth of joy.

avity? Is this the root of your hatred of money?

"Money will always remain an effect and refuse to replace you as e cause. Money is the product of virtue, but it will not give you rtue and it will not redeem your vices. Money will not give you e unearned, neither in matter nor in spirit. Is this the root of your tred of money?

e best among men. It's the person who would sell his soul for a ckel, who is loudest in proclaiming his hatred of money—and he as good reason to hate it. The lovers of money are willing to work or it. They know they are able to deserve it.

That sentence is the leper's bell of an approaching looter. So ong as men live together on earth and need means to deal with one nother—their only substitute, if they abandon money, is the muzzle of a gun.

"But money demands of you the highest virtues, if you wish to make it or to keep it. Men who have no courage, pride or self-esteem,

the value of their looted money—the men who are the hitchhikers of virtue In a moral society, these are the criminals, and the statutes are written to protect you against them But society establishes criminals by right and looters by law—men

use force to seize the wealth of *disarmed* victims—then money becomes its creators avenger Such looters believe it safe to rob defenseless men once they ve passed a law to disarm them But their loot becomes the magnet for other looters who get it from them as they got it Then the race goes, not to the ablest at production, but to those most ruthless at brutality When force is the standard, the murderer wins over the pickpocket. And then that society vanishes in a spread of ruins and slaughter

Do you wish to know whether that day is coming? Watch money Money is the barometer of a society's virtue When you see that

tect you against them but protect them against you—when you see corruption being rewarded and honesty becoming a self-sacrifice—you may know that your society is doomed Money is so noble a medium that it does not compete with guns and it does not make

to survive as half

start by destroying money for money is men s protection and the base of a moral existence Destroyers seize gold and leave to its owners a counterfeit pile of paper This kills all objective standards and delivers men into the arbitrary power of an arbitrary setter of values Gold was an objective value an equivalent of wealth produced Paper is a mortgage on wealth that does not exist backed by a gun aimed at those who are expected to produce it Paper is a check drawn by legal looters upon an account which is not theirs upon the virtue of the victims Watch for the day when it bounces marked Account overdrawn

When you have made evil the means of survival do not expect men to remain good Do not expect them to stay moral and lose their lives for the purpose of becoming the fodder of the immoral Do not expect them to produce when production is punished and looting rewarded Do not ask, Who is destroying the world? You are

"You stand in the midst of the greatest achievements of the greatest productive civilization and you wonder why it s crumbling around you while you re damning its life-blood—money You look upon money as the savages did before you, and you wonder why the jungle is creeping back to the edge of your cities Throughout men's history, money was always seized by looters of one brand or another whose names changed but whose method remained the same to seize wealth by force and to keep the producers bound demeaned defamed deprived of honor That phrase about the evil of money which you mouth with such righteous recklessness comes from a time when wealth was produced by the labor of slaves—slaves who repeated the motions once discovered by somebody's mind and left *unimproved* for centuries So long as production was rule

force, and wealth was obtained by conquest, there was little to nquer Yet through all the centuries of stagnation and starvation, en exalted the looters as aristocrats of the sword, as aristocrats birth, as aristocrats of the bureau, and despised the producers, slaves as traders, as shopkeepers—as industrialists

"To the glory of mankind, there was, for the first and only time history, a *country of money*—and I have no higher, more revert tribute to pay to America, for this means a country of reason, stice freedom, production, achievement. For the first time man s ind and money were set free, and there were no fortunes-by-connest, but only fortunes by work, and instead of swordsmen and aves there appeared the real maker of wealth, the greatest worker, e highest type of human being—the self made man—the Ameri an industrialist.

"If you ask me to name the proudest distinction of Americans, I ould choose—because it contains all the others—the fact that they ere the people who created the phrase to *make* money' No other

[illegible]

y the rotted cultures of the looters continents Now the looters' redo has brought you to regard your proudest achievements as a allmark of shame, your prosperity as guilt, your greatest men, [illegible] ificent factories [illegible] labor of whip [illegible] er who simpers at he sees no difference between the power of the dollar and the power of the whip, ought to learn the difference on his own hide— s, I think, he will

"Until and unless you discover that money is the root of all good, you ask for your own destruction. When money ceases to be the tool by which men deal with one another, then men become the tools of men. Blood, whips and guns—or dollars Take your choice— there is no other—and your time is running out."

Francisco had not glanced at Rearden once while speaking but the moment he finished, his eyes went straight to Rearden s face Rearden stood motionless, seeing nothing but Francisco d Anconia across the moving figures and angry voices between them

There were people who had listened but now hurried away, and people who said "It s horrible! — It s not true! — How vicious [illegible] wishing [illegible] rancisco

"Señor d Anconia," declared the woman with the earrings, "I don't agree with you!"

"If you can refute a single sentence I uttered, madame I shall hear it gratefully"

"Oh, I can't answer you. I don't have any answers, my mind

doesn't work that way, but I don't *feel* that you're right, so I know that you're wrong"

"How do you know it?"

"I *feel* it I don't go by my head, but by my heart. You might b good at logic, but you're heartless."

"Madame, when we'll see men dying of starvation around us, you heart won't be of any earthly use to save them. And I'm heartless enough to say that when you'll scream, 'but I didn't know it'— you will not be forgiven."

The woman turned away, a shudder running through the flesh o her cheeks and through the angry tremor of her voice "Well, it' certainly a funny way to talk at a party!"

A portly man

cheerfulness sugge

to let it become

money, señor, I think I'm darn glad that I've got a goodly piece d'Anconia Copper stock."

Francisco said gravely "I suggest that you think twice, sir"

if the othe

od friend I

He saw his own smile reflected in Francisco's face. "Hello"

"I want to speak to you"

"To whom do you think I've been speaking for the last quart of an hour?'

Rearden chuckled, in the manner of acknowledging an opponent round. 'I didn't think you had noticed me"

"I noticed, when I came in, that you were one of the only tw

to see me"

to see you?"

Francisco shrugged and said lightly, "A woman"

Rearden noticed that Francisco had led him aside, away fro the group, in so skillfully natural a manner that neither he nor th others had known it was being done intentionally

"I didn't expect to find you here," said Francisco "You shouldn have come to this party"

"Why not?"

"May I ask what made you come?"

"My wife was anxious to accept the invitation"

"Forgive me if I put it in such form, but it would have been muc more proper and less dangerous if she had asked you to take h on a tour of whorehouses"

"What danger are you talking about?"

"Mr Rearden you do not know these people's way of doing bus ness or how they interpret your presence here In your code, but n in theirs, accepting a man's hospitality is a token of good will declaration that you and your host stand on terms of a civiliz

lationsh p Don t give them that kind of sanction."
"Then why d d yo i come here?"
Francisco shrugged gaily "Oh I—it doesn t matter what I do 'm only a party hound."
"What are you do ng at th s party?"
"Just looking for conquests "
"Found any?
H s face suddenly earnest Franc sco answered gravely almost olemnly "Yes—what I think is go ng to be my best and greatest "
Rearden s anger was involuntary the cry not of reproach but of lespair "How can you waste yourself that way?"
The faint suggest on of a smile l ke the rise of a d stant l ght, came into Franc sco s eyes as he asked Do you care to admit that you care about it?"
"You re go ng to hear a few more admissions, if that s what you're after Before I met you I used to wonder how you could waste a fortune such as yours. Now t s worse because I can t de pise you as I d d as I d l ke to yet the question is much more errible How can you waste a mind such as yours?"
"I don't think I'm wasting it right now "
"I don't know whether there s ever been anything that meant a lamn to you—but I m go ng to tell you what I ve never sa d to any me before When I met you, do you remember that you sa d you wanted to offer me your gratitude?"
There was no trace of amusement left in Francisco s eyes Rear len had never faced so solemn a look of respect. "Yes, Mr Rear len" he answered qu etly
"I told you that I didn t need it and I insulted you for it All ight, you ve won That speech you made tonight—that was what you were offering me wasn't it?"
"Yes Mr Rearden "
"I w ~

le p ll it amused you to guess that I was glad to see you you have someth ng real to laugh about now if you wish "
"It might take me a few years but I will prove to you that these are the things I do not laugh about."
"Prove it now—by answering one question Why don't you practice what you preach?"
"Are you sure that I don t?"
"If the things you sa d are true, if you have the greatness to know it you should have been the leading industrialist of the world by now "
Franc sco sa d gravely as he had sa d to the portly man but with an odd note of gentleness in his vo ce "I suggest that you hink tw ce Mr Rearden "
I've thought about you more than I care to adm t. I have fo to answer "

"Let me give you a hint If the things I said are true, who is the guiltiest man in this room tonight?

"I suppose—James Taggart?"

'No Mr Rearden, it is not James Taggart. But you must define the guilt and choose the man yourself"

"A few years ago, I would have said that it's you I still think that that s what I ought to say But I'm almost in the position of that fool woman who spoke to you every reason I know tells me that you re guilty—and yet I can't feel it"

"You *are* making the same mistake as that woman, Mr Rearden, though in a nobler form"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean much more than just your judgment of me That woman and all those like her keep evading the thoughts which they know to be good You keep pushing out of your mind the thoughts which you believe to be evil They do it, because they want to avoid effort. You do it because you won't permit yourself to consider anything that would spare you They indulge their emotions at any cost You sacrifice your emotions as the first cost of any problem. They are willing to bear nothing You are willing to bear anything. They keep evading responsibility You keep assuming it. But don't you see that the essential error is the same? Any refusal to recognize reality for any reason whatever, has disastrous consequences. There are no evil thoughts except one the refusal to think Don't ignore your own desires Mr Rearden Don't sacrifice them Examine their cause There is a limit to how much you should have to bear'

"How did you know this about me?'

"I made the same mistake, once But not for long"

'I wish—" Rearden began and stopped abruptly

[illegible]

do"

[illegible] n saw the

[illegible] certain to

be pain, he saw Francisco's first moment of hesitation "Mr Rearden do you own any d Anconia Copper stock?"

Rearden looked at him, bewildered "No"

"Some day, you'll know what treason I m committing right now but Don't ever buy any d Anconia Copper stock. Don't ever deal with d Anconia Copper in any way"

"Why?"

"When you'll learn the full reason, you'll know whether there's ever been anything—or anyone—that meant a damn to me, and and how much he did mean"

Rearden frowned he had remembered something "I wouldn't [illegible] t of the dou

[illegible] growing rich

[illegible] n insult but

cleared his face back into his look of assurance "Did you think that

as I who wheedled those directives out of the robber plan ?"

If not, then who did it?"

My hitchhikers."

Without your consent?"

Without my knowledge"

I'd hate to admit how much I want to believe you—but there's way for you to prove it now"

No? I'll prove it to you within the next fifteen minutes"

How? The fact remains that you've profited the most from those ctives."

That's true. I've profited more than Mr Mouch and his gang ld ever imagine. After my years of work, they gave me just the nce I needed."

Are you boasting?"

'You bet I am!" Rearden saw incredulously that Francisco's eyes l a hard, bright look, the look, not of a party hound but of a n of action. "Mr Rearden, do you know where most of those aristocrats keep their hidden money? Do you know where st of the fair-share vultures have invested their profits from arden Metal?"

'No, but—"

'In d'Anconia Copper stock. Safely out of the way and out of country D'Anconia Copper—an old invulnerable company, rich that it would last for three more generations of looting A npany managed by a decadent playboy who doesn't give a damn, o'll let them use his property in any way they please and just ntinue to make money for them—automatically as did his an tors. Wasn't that a perfect setup for the looters Mr Rearden? ly—what one single point did they miss?"

Rearden was staring at him. "What are you driving at?"

Francisco laughed suddenly "It's too bad about those profiteers Rearden Metal You wouldn't want them to lose the money you de for them, would you, Mr Rearden? But accidents do happen the world—you know what they say man is only a helpless ything at the mercy of nature's disasters For instance there was fire at ... tomorrow morning
f of the port
x my tenses?
he d'Anconia
nes at Orāno—no lives lost no casualties except the mines emselves It will be found that the mines are done for because ey had been worked in the wrong places for months—what can u expect from a playboy's management? The great deposits of pper will be buried under tons of mountain where a Sebastian Anconia would not be able to reclaim them in less than three ars, and a People's State will never reclaim them at all When e stockholders begin to look into things they will find that the nes at Campos at San Félix, at Las Heras have been worked exactly the same manner and have been running at a loss f er a year, only the playboy juggled the books and kept it out

the newspapers Shall I tell you what they will discover about the management of h d A r ~ ~ fleet?
anywa
tomor
crashe
all over the gutters!
Th ~ h ~ h ,
so

ha
co
that was lett, as at the awakening from a narcotic was the feeling that he had known some immense kind of freedom never to be matched in reality This was like the Wyatt fire again, he thought, this was his secret danger

He found himself backing away from Francisco d Anconia Francisco stood watching him intently and looked as if he had been watching him all through that unknown length of time.

"There are no evil thoughts Mr Rearden" Francisco said softly "except one the refusal to think.

'No" said Rearden it was almost a whisper he had to keep his voice down he was afraid that he would hear himself scream it, no if this is the key to you no don t expect me to cheer you you didn t have the strength to fight them you chose the easiest most vicious way deliberate destruction the destruction of an achievement you hadn t produced and couldn't match

'That s not what you'll read in the newspapers tomorrow There won t be any evidence of del berate destruction Everything happened in the normal explicable justifiable course of plain incompetence. Incompetence isn t supposed to be punished nowadays is it? The boys in Buenos Aires and the boys in Santiago will probably want to hand me a ~ h ~ ~ ~ reward. There s still a great p
though a great part of
I ve done it intentionall

"I think you're the guiltiest man in this room" said Rearden quietly wearily even the fire of his anger was gone he felt nothing but the emptiness left by the death of a great hope. "I think you re worse than anything I had supposed "

Francisco looked at him with a strange half-smile of serenity the serenity of a v ctory over pain and did not answer

It was their silence that let them hear the voices of the two men who stood a few steps away and they turned to look at the speakers

The stocky elderly man was obviously a businessman of the conscientious unspectacular kind His formal dress suit was of good qual ty but of a cut fash onable twenty years before with the fa ntest tinge of green at the seams he had had few occas ons to wear it His shirt studs were ostentatiously too large but it was the

etic ostentation of an heirloom, intricate pieces of old fashioned orkmanship, that had probably come to him through four generations, like his business His face had the expression which, these ays, was the mark of an honest man. an expression of bewilderment. He was looking at his companion, trying hard—conscientiously, helplessly, hopelessly—to understand.

o be the stock complaint nowadays, it's the usual whine of people whose profits are squeezed a little I don't know, we'll have to see, we'll have to decide whether we'll permit you to make any profits r not."

Rearden glanced at Francisco—and saw a face that went beyond

glad that you came to this party. I want you to see this"

Then, raising his voice, Francisco said suddenly, in the gay, loose, piercing tone of a man of complete irresponsibility, "You won't grant me that loan, Mr. Rearden? It puts me on a terrible spot. I must get the money—I must raise it tonight—I must raise it before the Stock Exchange opens in the morning, because otherwise—"

He did not have to continue, because the little man with the mustache was clutching at his arm.

Rearden had never believed that a human body could change dimensions within one's sight, but he saw the man shrinking in weight, in posture, in form, as if the air were let out of his lumps, and what had been an arrogant ruler was suddenly a piece of scrap that could not be a threat to anyone

"Is . . . is there something wrong, Señor d'Anconia? I mean, on . . . on the Stock Exchange?"

Francisco jerked his finger to his lips, with a frightened glance. "Keep quiet," he whispered. "For God's sake, keep quiet!"

The man was shaking "Something's . wrong?"

"You don't happen to own any d'Anconia Copper stock, do you?"

ly, that's too bad! Well vord of honor that you to start a panic."

"What you'd better do is run to your stockbroker and sell as fast as you can—because things haven't been going too well for d'Anconia Copper, I'm trying to raise some money, but if I don't succeed, you'll be lucky if you'll have ten cents on your dollar tomorrow morning—oh my! I forgot that you can't reach your

stockbroker before tomorrow morning—well, it's too bad but—"

The man was running across the room pushing people out of his way, like a torpedo shot into the crowd

"Watch" said Francisco austerely, turning to Rearden.

The man was lost in the crowd, they could not see him, they could not tell to whom he [illegible] whether he had [illegible]

then like the accelerating branching that runs through a wall about to crumble the streaks of emptiness slashed, not by a human touch but by the impersonal breath of terror

There were th[illegible] of silence. [illegible]

tend that nothing was happening

There were [illegible]

were running out, running to telephones, running to one another, clutching or pushing the bodies around them at random These men, the most powerful men in the country, those who held unanswerable to any power the power over every man's food and every man's enjoyment of his span of years on earth—these men had become a pile of rubble, clattering in the wind of panic the rubble left of a structure when its key pillar has been cut.

James Taggart his face indecent in its exposure of emotions which centuries had taught men to keep hidden, rushed up to Francisco and screamed, "Is it true?"

"Why, James" said Francisco smiling "what's the matter? Why do you seem to be upset? Money is the root of all evil—so *I just* got tired of being evil"

Taggart ran toward the main exit, yelling something to Orren Boyle on the way Boyle nodded and kept on nodding with the eagerness and humility of an inefficient servant, then darted off in another direction Cherryl her wedding veil coiling like a crystal cloud upon the air as she ran after him caught Taggart at the door "Jim what's the matter?" He pushed her aside and she fell against the stomach of Paul Larkin, as Taggart rushed out

Three persons stood immovably still like three pillars spaced through the room the lines of their sight cutting across the spread of the wreckage Dagny, looking at Francisco—Francisco and Rearden looking at each other.

hat time is it?"

ts running out, thought Rearden—but he answered, "I don't w Not yet midnight,' and remembering his wrist watch, added, wenty of."

I'm going to take a train home," said Lillian

He heard the sentence, but it had to wait its turn to enter the wded passages to his consciousness. He stood looking absently the living room of his suite, a few minutes' elevator ride away m the party In a moment, he answered automatically, 'At this ır?"

It's still early There are plenty of trains running"

You're welcome to stay here, of course"

No, I think I prefer to go home" He did not argue "What about t, Henry? Do you intend going home tonight?'

'No" He added, "I have business appointments here tomorrow"

'As you wish."

ısıbılıty, there's a limit to the negligence a man can permit nself!" He glanced at her face it was oddly tense, the features arpened, making her look older "He owed a certain duty to his ockholders, didn't he? . . . Didn't he, Henry?'

"Do you mind if we don't discuss it?'

She made a tightening, sidewise movement with her lips, the uivalent of a shrug, and walked into the bedroom

He stood at the window, looking down at the streaming roofs of tomobiles, letting his eyes rest on something while his faculty of ght was disconnected His mind was still focused on the crowd in e ballroom downstairs and on two figures in that crowd But as s living room remained on the edge of his vision so the sense of me action he had to perform remained on the edge of his con ıousness ... hat he had ... there ... range ... ment

...illian came out, as trimly groomed as she had arrived ... beige aveling suit outlining her figure with efficient tightness the hat lted over half a head of hair set in waves She carried her suit se, swinging it a little, as if in demonstration of her ability to rry it.

He reached over mechanically and took the suitcase out of her and.

"What are you doing?" she asked

"I'm going to take you to the station."

"Like this? You haven't changed your clothes"

"It doesn't matter."

"You don't have to escort me I'm quite able to find my own way If you have business appointments tomorrow, you'd better go to bed"

He did not answer, but walked to the door, held it open for her and followed her to the elevator.

They remained silent when they rode in a taxicab to the station At such moments as he remembered her presence, he noticed that she sat efficiently straight, almost flaunting the perfection of her poise, she seemed alertly awake and contented, as if she were starting out on a purposeful journey of early morning.

The cab stopped at the entrance to the Taggart Terminal. The ... transformed the late ... ry Lillian ... ave to get ... —or next

month?"

"I'll telephone you," he said

She waved her gloved hand at him and disappeared into the lights of the entrance As the cab started forward, he gave the driver the address of Dagny's apartment.

The apartment was dark when he entered, but the door to her bedroom was half-open and he heard her voice saying, "Hello, Hank."

He walked in, asking, "Were you asleep?"

"No."

He switched on the light. She lay in bed, her head propped by the pillow, her hair falling smoothly to her shoulders, as if she had not moved for a long time; but her face was untroubled She looked like a schoolgirl, with the tailored collar of a pale blue nightgown lying severely high at the base of her throat; the nightgown's front was a deliberate contrast to the severity, a spread of pale blue embroidery that looked ...

... forehead, ... iderness, in th ... this adversar ... ngth, but who

should have had his protection

"You're carrying so much," he said, "and it's I who make it harder for you . . ."

"No, Hank, you don't ... but it ... have n ... w it an

"I had no right to bring her into your presence"

"It did not hurt me Only . . ."

"Yes?"

[illegible] was hard to see"

but whatever loathe, it's to s concern but e But if you want to know, since you know it already—yes, it hell for me And I wish it were worse At least, I'm not letting self get away with it."

[illegible]

new you were married I knew what I was doing I chose to do There's nothing that you owe me, no duty that you have to con- ler."

He shook his head slowly, in protest.

"Hank, I want nothing from you except what you wish to give me you remember that you called me a trader once? I want you to me to me seeking nothing but your own enjoyment So long as u wish to remain married, whatever your reason, I have no right resent it. My way of trading is to know that the joy you give me paid for by the joy you get from me—not by your suffering or ne I don't accept sacrifices and I don't make them If you asked

[illegible]

he

he

I have no right to think of it."

"You must have wondered about it."

"I did . . . before I came to Ellis Wyatt's house. Not since"

"You've never asked me a question about it"

"And won't"

He was silent for a moment, then said, looking straight at her, [illegible] she had always granted him [illegible] er [illegible]

"Did you think I could?"

"I've never permitted myself to wonder about that"

"Dagny, do you mean that if I had, you . . . you'd accept that, too?"

"Yes."

"You wouldn t hate it?"

I d hate it more than I can tell you But if that were your choice, I would accept it I want you Hank.

He took her hand and raised it to his lips she felt the moment's struggle in his body in the sudden movement with which he came down half-collapsing and let his mouth cling to her shoulder. Then he pulled her forward he pulled the length of her body in the pale blue nightgown to lie stretched across his knees, he held it with

they

He

had

always to

betrayed

She str

her "No Hank she said her face hard

The brief taut movement of his lips was a smile "I know that you won t answer it but I won t stop asking—because that is what I ll never accept"

"Ask yourself why you won t accept it."

He answered his hand moving slowly from her breasts to her knees as if stressing his ownership and hating it, Because the things you've permitted me to do I didn t think you could, not ever not even for me but to find that you did, and more that you had permitted another man had wanted him to had—"

"Do you understand what you re saying? That you ve never accepted my wanting you either—you've never accepted that I *should* want you just as I should have wanted him once"

He said, his voice low "That s true

She tore herself away from him with a brusque twisting movement she stood up but she stood looking down at him with a

real guilt?

to enjoy

You've

"He said that, too"

"Who?"

"Francisco d Anconia"

He wondered why he had the impression that the name shocked her and that she answered an instant too late "He said *that* to you?"

"We were talking about quite a different subject."

In a moment she said calmly "I saw you talking to him. Which one of yo

"We w

"I thin b up we re in

for tomo

"I know he has St ll what do you think of him as a person"

"I don t know I ought to think that he s the most depraved person I've ever met."

"You ought to? But you don't?"

I can't quite make myself feel certain of it"
smiled "That's what's strange about him I know that he's a
loafer, a cheap playboy, the most viciously irresponsible

you've fallen for him
es—I think I have" He smiled. "Why does it frighten you?"
ecause . . because I think he's going to hurt you in some
le way . . and the more you see in him the harder it will
bear . and it will take you a long time to get over it, if
I feel that I ought to warn you against him, but I can't
cause I'm certain of nothing about him, not even whether he's

nge thing is what he does make me feel."
"What?"
"Hope."

black
Dagny
house

* *

Through a gray drizzle of rain, the calendar above the roofs said
eptember 3 and a clock on another tower said 10 40 as Rearden

Rearden leaned wearily against the seat the disaster seemed to b no more than a stale news story read long ago He felt nothin except an uncomfortable sense of impropriety at finding himself in the morning streets, dressed in evening clothes He felt no desi to return from the world he had left to the world he saw drizzle past the windows of the taxi

He turned the key in the door of his hotel suite, hoping to g back to a desk as fast as possible and have to see nothing from him

They hit his consciousness together: the breakfast table—the do to his bedroom, open upon the sight of a bed that had been slept —and Lillian's voice saying, "Good morning, Henry."

She sat in an armcha ... withou ... There ... a cigar ...

As h ... down ... thing, Henry?

He stood like a man in military uniform at some official procee ings where emotions could not be permitted to exist. "It is for yo to speak."

"Aren't you going to try to justify yourself?"

"No"

"A ...

" ...

for ...

S ...

chair's back. Didn't you expect to be caught, sooner or later she asked "If a man like you stays pure as a monk for over year, didn't you think ... the reason? It funny, though, from getting ca ... the breakfast table. I felt certain that you weren't going ... here, last night. And it wasn't difficult or expensive at all to find o from a hotel employee, this morning, that you haven't spent a nig in these rooms in the past year."

He said nothing

"The man of stainless steel!" She laughed. "The man of achiev ment and honor who's so ... times th

...

... and I won't answer."

she shrugged "I suppose it makes no difference There's only one standard type for the one standard purpose I've always known that under that ascetic look of yours you were a plain, crude sensualist who sought nothing from a woman except an animal satisfaction which I pride myself on not having given you I knew that your vaunted sense of honor would collapse some day and you would be drawn to the lowest, cheapest type of female, just like any other cheating husband" She chuckled "That great admirer of yours,

that they seek is most notoriously *not* brains I knew your real nature and inclinations Didn't I?' He said nothing Do you know what I think of you now?"

"You have the right to condemn me in any way you wish"

She laughed. "The great man who was so contemptuous—in business—of weaklings who trimmed corners or fell by the wayside, because they couldn't match his strength of character and steadfastness of purpose! How do you feel about it now?

"My feelings need not concern you You have the right to decide what you wish me to do I will agree to any demand you make, except one don't ask me to give it up"

"Oh, I wouldn't ask you to give it up! I wouldn't expect you to

If that is what you thought, why did you stay with me?

She answered severely, 'It's a question you have lost the right to ask."

"That's true" he said, thinking that only one conceivable reason, her love for him, could justify her answer

"No, I'm not going to divorce you Do you suppose that I will allow your romance with a floozie to deprive me of my home my name, my social position? I shall preserve such pieces of my life as I can, whatever does not rest on so shoddy a foundation as your fidelity ... you a divorce ... y married"

why don't

you sit down?"

He remained standing "Please say what you have to say"

"I will not consider any unofficial divorce such as a separati

You may continue your love idyll in the subways and basements

officially yours, but will now be mine."

If you wish"

She leaned back loosely, in a manner of untidy relaxation, her legs spread apart, her arms resting in two strict parallels on the arms of the chair—like a judge who could permit himself to be sloppy

ing whatever you wish by the simple means of your ... you cannot conceive of things that are non-commercial, non negotiable, non subject to any kind of trade You're unable to believe that there may exist a person who feels no concern for money You cannot imagine what *that* means Well, I think you're going to learn Oh yes, of course you'll agree to any demand I make, from now on I want you to sit in that office of which you're so proud, in those precious mills of yours, and play the hero who works eighteen hours a day, the giant of industry who keeps the whole country going the genius who is above the common herd of whining, lying chiseling humanity Then I want you to come home and face the only person who knows you for what you really are, who knows the actual value of your word, of your honor, of your integrity, of your vaunted self esteem I want you to face, in your own home, the one person who despises you and has the right to do so I want you to look at me whenever you build another furnace, or pour another record breaking load of steel, or hear applause and admiration whenever you feel proud of yourself, whenever you feel clean whenever you feel drunk on the sense of your own greatness I want you to look at me whenever you hear of some act of depravity, ... feel anger at human corruption, or feel contempt for someone knavery, or are the victim of a new governmental extortion—*to know* and to know that you're no better, that you're superior to no one that there' ... I want you ... build ... it win, ... nself ...

perfect!

Somewhere outside of him and apart, as if he were reading in a brain not his own, he observed the thought that there was some flaw in the scheme of the punishment she wanted him to bear something wrong by its own terms, aside from its propriety ... justice, some practical miscalculation that would demolish it ... if discovered He did not attempt to discover it The thought went by as a moment's notation, made in cold curiosity, to be brought back in some distant future There was nothing within him no

[illegible]

ut he saw no evidence of pain in her manner Then perhaps the [illegible]gliness was the only means she could summon to hide it, he [illegible] the re- [illegible]

"Then you had better take the train home now"

[illegible]

ut a sense that [illegible] of con- [illegible] ded of [illegible]

Entering [illegible]

[illegible]

"Well, Mr Rearden," he said, by way of greeting, "I didn't know that even a hardened [illegible] ands, [illegible] ian, b[illegible]

"Hov[illegible]

Dr. Ferris sat down and made a few remarks about the colors of the leaves in the month of October, as he had observed them by the roadside on his long drive from Washington, undertaken specifically for the purpose of meeting Mr. Rearden in person Rearden said nothing. Dr [illegible] mmented on the [illegible] were one of the [illegible] ry [illegible] year and a half [illegible]

[illegible] Rearden

Dr Ferris gave a brief frown, as if a dot of the pattern had slipped and almost cost him the game, then chuckled, as if he had recaptured it. "That was a year and a half ago, Mr Rearden," he said easily. "Times change, and people change with the times—the wise ones do Wisdom lies in knowing when to remember and when to forget. Consistency is not a habit of mind which it is wise to practice or to expect of the human race."

He then proceeded to discourse upon the foolishness of cor sistency in a world where nothing was absolute except the princip of compromise He talked earnestly, but in a casual manner as both understood that this was not the main subject of their inte view yet oddly he spoke not in the tone of a foreword but in t tone of a postscript, as if the main subject had been settled lor ago

Rearden waited for the first Don t you think so?" and answer Please state the urgent matter for which you requested this appoi ment "

Dr Ferris looked astonished and blank for a moment, then sa brightly as if remembering an unimportant subject which could l disposed of without effort Oh that? That was in regard to t dates of delivery of Rearden Metal to the State Science Institut We should like to have five thousand tons by the first of Decemb and then we'll be quite agreeable to waiting for the balance of t order until after the first of the year '

Rearden sat looking at him silently for a long time each pass moment had the effect of making the gay intonations of Dr Ferr voice still hanging in the air of the room, seem more fooli When Dr Ferris had begun to dread that he would not answer all Rearden answered Hasn t the traffic cop with the leath leggings whom you sent here, given you a report on his conver tion with me?

Why yes Mr Rearden but—"

"What else do you want to hear?'

"But that was five months ago Mr Rearden A certain event h taken place since which makes me quite sure that you have chang your mind and that you will make no trouble for us at all just we will make no trouble for you "

What event?"

"An event of which you have far greater knowledge than I—b you see I do have knowledge of it, even though you would mu prefer me to have none "

What event?

'Since it is your secret Mr Rearden why not let it remain secret? Who doesn t have secrets nowadays? For instance Project is a secret You realize of course that we could obtain your Me simply by having it purchased in smaller quantities by varic government offices who would then transfer it to us—and y would not be able to prevent it But this would necessitate c letting a lot of lousy bureacrats —Dr Ferris smiled with disarmi frankness— oh yes we are as unpopular with one another as are with you private citizens—it would necessitate our letting a of other bureaucrats in on the secret of Project X which would highly undesirable at this time And so would any newspaper pul c ty about the Project—if we put you on trial for refusal to com with a government order But if you had to stand trial on anoth much more serious charge where Project X and the State Scier Institute were not involved and where you could not raise any is principle or arouse any public sympathy—why, that would t

convenience us at all, but it would cost you more than you would ire to contemplate Therefore, the only practical thing for you to

e

d

)f

ourse," said Dr Ferris lightly.

Rearden did not answer.

"Issues of principle are such a nuisance," said Dr Ferris, smiling, and such a waste of time for all concerned Now would you care to e a martyr for an issue of principle, only in circumstances where obody will know that that's what you are—nobody but you and e—where you won't get a chance to breathe a word about the issue the principle—where you won't be a hero, the creator of a pectacular new metal, making a stand against enemies whose actions ight appear somewhat shabby in the eyes of the public—where ou won't be a hero, but a common criminal, a greedy industrialist ho's cheated the law for a plain motive of profit, a racketeer of e black market who's broken the national regulations designed protect the public welfare—a hero without glory and without ublic, who'll accomplish no more than about half a column of ewsprint somewhere on page five—now would you still care to be at kind of martyr? Because that's just what the issue amounts to ow either you let us have the Metal or you go to jail for ten ears and take your friend Danagger along, too"

As a biologist, Dr Ferris had always been fascinated by the eory that animals had the capacity to smell fear, he had tried to evelop a similar capacity in himself Watching Rearden, he concluded that the man had long since decided to give in—because e caught no trace of any fear

"Who was your informer?" asked Rearden

"One of your friends, Mr Rearden. The owner of a copper mine Arizona, who reported to us that you had purchased an extra mount of copper last month, above the regular tonnage required or the monthly quota of Rearden Metal which the law permits you produce Copper is one of the ingredients of Rearden Metal, isn't it? That was all the information we needed The rest was easy to race. You mustn't blame that mine owner too much The copper roducers, as you know, are being squeezed so badly right now hat the man had to offer something of value in order to obtain a avor, an 'emergency need' ruling which suspended a few of the irectives in his case and gave him a little breathing spell The

...t of your life, are now in my possession—and I am offering ou a trade I'm sure you won't object, since trade is your specialty The form may be a little different from what it was in your youth—but you're a smart trader, you've always known how to take ad-

a much more realistic age"

But there was a peculiar difference, thought Rearden, betw the manner of a plain blackmailer and that of Dr Ferris A bla mailer would show signs of gloating over his victim's sin and acknowledgır

a sense of d

His manner

suggested a sense of safety, it held no tone of condemnation, bu hint of comradeship, a comradeship based—for both of them— self-contempt The sudden feeling that made Rearden lean forwa in a posture of eager attentiveness, was the feeling that he was abo to discover another step along his half glimpsed trail

Seeing Rearden's look of interest, Dr. Ferris smiled and co gratulated himself on having caught the right key The game w clear to him now, the markings of the pattern were falling in t right order, some men, thought Dr. Ferris, would do anything long as it was left unnamed, but this man wanted frankness, tl was the tough realist he had ...

"I

"I c.

Why

than most of th

a long time, an

with Jim Tagga

Taggart, he's n

ren Boyle w

him down

gger in line

Look how impractical you've been about that. I know why yo sold him the Metal—it's because you need him to get coal fro

eople like Balph Eubank—and be yourself Come down to
: You're not the man who'd let sentiment interfere with busi-
"

lo," said Rearden slowly, "I wouldn't. Not any kind of senti-
:"

r Ferris smiled "Don't you suppose we knew it?" he said, his suggesting that he was letting his patent leather hair down to ess a fellow criminal by a display of superior cunning "We've ed a long time to get something on you You honest men are a problem and such a headache But we knew you'd slip • we wanted."

your laws"

'ell, what do you think they're for?"

r Ferris did not notice the sudden look on Rearden's face, the of a man hit by the first vision of that which he had sought to Dr Ferris was past the stage of seeing, he was intent upon deing the last blows to an animal caught in a trap

)id you really think that we want those laws to be observed?" Dr Ferris "We *want* them broken You'd better get it straight it's not a bunch of boy scouts you're up against—then you'll w that this is not the age for beautiful gestures We're after er and we mean it You fellows were pikers, but we know the trick, and you'd better get wise to it There's no way to rule cent men The only power any government has is the power to k down on criminals Well, when there aren't enough criminals, *makes* them One declares so many things to be a crime that it omes impossible for men to live without breaking laws Who its a nation of law abiding citizens? What's there in that for one? But just pass the kind of laws that can neither be observed enforced nor objectively interpreted—and you create a nation law breakers—and then you cash in on guilt Now that's the em, Mr Rearden, that's the game, and once you understand it, 'll be much easier to deal with"

Vatching Dr Ferris watch him, Rearden saw the sudden twitch nxiety, the look that precedes panic, as if a clean card had fallen the table from a deck Dr Ferris had never seen before

Vhat Dr Ferris was seeing in Rearden's face was the look of inous serenity that comes from the sudden answer to an old, k problem, a look of relaxation and eagerness together, there was 'outhful clarity in Rearden's eyes and the faintest touch of conipt in the line of his mouth Whatever this meant—and Dr Fercould not decipher it—he was certain of one thing the face held sign of guilt

There's a flaw in your system, Dr Ferris," Rearden said quietly, nost lightly, "a practical flaw which you will discover when you t me on trial for selling four thousand tons of Rearden Metal to n Danagger"

It took twenty seconds—Rearden could feel them moving past

slowly—at the end of which Dr Ferris became convinced that he had heard Rearden's final decision

Do you think we're bluffing?" snapped Dr Ferris, his voice suddenly had the quality of the animals he had spent so much time studying it sounded as if he were baring his teeth

"I don t know," said Rearden. 'I don't care, one way or the other"

'Are you going to be as impractical as that?"

"The evaluation of an action as 'practical,' Dr Ferris, depends on what it is that one wishes to practice."

'Haven t you always placed your self-interest above all else?"

"That is what I am doing right now"

"If you think we ll let you get away with a—"

"You will now please get out of here"

"Whom do you think you re fooling?' Dr Ferris' voice had rise close to the edge of a scream 'The day of the barons of industry done! You ve got the goods, but we've got the goods on *you* an you re going to play it our way or you'll—"

Rearden had pressed a button, Miss Ives entered the office.

"Dr Ferris has become confused and has lost his way, Miss Ives said Rearden Will you escort him out please?' He turned to Ferr 'Miss Ives is a woman, she weighs about a hundred pounds, and sl has no practical qualifications at all, only a superlative intellectu efficiency She would never do for a bouncer in a saloon, only in impractical place, such as a factory"

Miss Ives looked as if she was performing a duty of no great emot onal a on fi ... of shipp

She came back a few minutes later, laughing in uncontrolla exultation

"Mr Rearden" she asked, laughing at her fear for him, at th danger, at everything but the triumph of the moment, "what is you're doing?"

He sat in a pose he had never permitted himself before, a pose had resented as the most vulgar symbol of the businessman—he leaning back in his chair, with his feet on his desk—and it seem to her that the posture had an air of peculiar nobility, that it w not the pose of a stuffy executive, but of a young crusader

"I think I'm discovering a new continent, Gwen" he answe cheerfully "A continent that should have been discovered alc with America, but wasn't."

* *

"I have to speak of it to *you*," said Eddie Willers, looking at worker across the table "I don t know why it helps me, but it d —just to know that you re hearing me"

It was late and the lights of the underground cafeteria were l but Eddie Willers could see the worker's eyes looking at l intently

"I feel as if . . . as if there s no people and no human langu

," said Eddie Willers "I feel that if I were to scream in the mid- of the streets, there would be no one to hear it. . No, that's quite what I feel, it's this I feel that someone *is* screaming in middle of the streets, but people are passing by and no sound reach them—and it's not Hank Rearden or Ken Danagger or I 's screaming and yet it seems as if it's all three of us . . n't you see that somebody should have risen to defend them, but ody has or will? Rearden and Danagger were indicted this morn-

n't say a word, he just stood there, as if the room were empty The newspapers are saying that both of them should be thrown jail No . . . no, I'm not shaking, I'm all right, I'll be all it in a moment . . . That's why I haven't said a word to her, 'as afraid I'd explode and I didn't want to make it harder for her, now how she feels . . Oh yes, *she* spoke to me about it, and

has that there's something like a shift of stress involved—eco-

ice then, she says, it's been as if the center of gravity were swing wildly—like in a sinking cargo ship out of control—shifting m industry to industry, from man to man When we lose one, other becomes that much more desperately needed—and he's the e we lose next. Well what could be a greater disaster now than have the country's coal supply left in the hands of men like Boyle Larkin? And there's no one left in the coal industry who amounts much, ... he feels almost as he's a ... waiting be cut ... t sound eposter ... you bet ... er thing involved stage—not anger both—before he knew long before ... Ellis Wyatt had reached that stage and something ould happen to him When she saw Ken Danagger in the court- om today, she said that he was ready for the destroyer . . .

thinks there's a system behind it, all intention,
destroyer loose in the country, who's cutting down the buttresses one after another to let the structure collapse upon our heads Some ... ble purpose ... She
ing
to
ust

afraid for Danagger, terribly afraid . . . No She knows ... about the destroyer She has no clue to his identity, no evidence of his existence—except the trail of destruction But she feels certain that he exists No, she cannot guess his purpose She says that ... There are times when she feels
the world
found th
ve her lif
ecause he

the most evil creature that's ever existed, the man who's draining th brains of the world I guess it's getting to be too much fo her, at times—even for her I don't think she allows herself t know how tired she is The other morning, I came to work ver early and I found her asleep on the couch in her office, with th light still burning on her desk She'd been there all night I ju ... kened her if the who
p? Why, s
tain that s
her, as if s

had nothing to hide or to fear That's what was terrible—that gui less purity of her face, with her body twisted by exhaustion, st lying there as she had collapsed She looked—say, why should y ask me what she looks like when she's asleep? . . . Yes, you right, why do *I* talk about it? I shouldn't I don't know what ma me think of it Don't pay any attention to me I'll be all rig tomorrow I guess it's just that I'm sort of shell-shocked by t courtroom I keep thinking if men like Rearden and Danag are to be ... working in a
enou
n—
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't th
yone

defend them?"

"Mr Danagger will be free in a moment, Miss Taggart He has visitor in his office. Will you excuse it, please?" said the secretary.

Through the two hours of her flight to Pittsburgh, Dagny had been sely unable to justify her anxiety or to dismiss it, there was no son to count minutes, yet she had felt a blind desire to hurry. anxiety vanished when she entered the anteroom of Ken nagger's office she had reached him, nothing had happened to vent it, she felt safety, confidence and an enormous sense of ief.

The words of the secretary demolished it You're becoming a ward—thought Dagny, feeling a causeless jolt of dread at the

the
l the
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mall

e mine doorways
the flaming leaves
Starnesville

She noticed that there was only a stub left of the cigarette be-een her fingers She lighted another

When she glanced at the clock on the wall of the anteroom, she ught the secretary glancing at it at the same time Her appointment as for three o'clock; the white dial said 3 12

"Please forgive it, Miss Taggart," said the secretary Mr Danag-r will be through, any moment now Mr Danagger is extremely nctual about his appointments Please believe me that this is un-ecedented"

"I know it." She knew that Ken Danagger was as rigidly exact out his schedule as a railroad timetable and that he had been own to cancel an interview if a caller permitted himself to arrive ve minutes late

The secretary was an elderly spinster with a forbidding manner manner of even toned courtesy impervious to any shock, just as er spotless white blouse was impervious to an atmosphere filled h coal dust Dagny thought it strange that a hardened, well-ained woman of this type should appear to be nervous she volun-ered no conversation, she sat still, bent over some pages of paper

on her desk. Half of Dagny's cigarette had gone in smoke, while the woman still sat looking at the same page

When she raised her head to glance at the clock, the dial said 3 30 "I know that this is inexcusable, Miss Taggart" The note of apprehension was obvious in her voice now. "I am unable to understand it."

here?"

under any circumstances or for any reason whatever.'

"When did he do that?"

The moment's pause was like a small air cushion for the answer "Two hours ago"

office She coul

never have permitted this to happen."

The door was not locked, thought Dagny, she felt an unreasonable desire to tear it open and walk in—it was only a few wooden boards with a brass knob, it would require only a small muscular contraction of her arm—but she looked away, knowing that the power of

more impregnab

arettes in the as

er a sharper fee

was thinking o

Hugh Akston she had written to him, at his diner in Wyoming asking him to tell her where he had obtained the cigarette with the dollar sign, her letter had come back, with a postal inscription t inform her that h

forwarding addres

the pre

her han

rette stu

As she looked up, her eyes met the glance of the secretary watching her. "I am sorry, Miss Taggart. I don't know what to do about it" It was an openly desperate plea "I don t dare interrupt"

Dagny asked slowly

of office etique

the gentlem

Dagny's eyes a

ger"

Danagger at

d that this was an appointment which Mr Danagger had made

ively, in the tone

ng at the age of

ive After another silence, she added, "The strange thing is that

years old He seems to

"No

"What

...ty had been silent for a long time, and the hands of the dial ...re approaching 3·50 when the buzzer rang on the secretary's ...sk—the bell from Danagger's office, the signal of permission to ...ter.

They both ... and the secretary rushed forward,

exit door

he knock

...the door against the jamb and the faint ... of the glass panel

She saw the man who had left, by his reflection on Ken Danag-...r's face It was not the face she had seen in the courtroom, it was ...t the face she had known for years as a countenance of unchang-...g, unfeeling rigidity—it was a face which a young man of twenty ...ould hope for, but could not achieve, a face from which every ...n of strain had been wiped out, so that the lined cheeks, the ...eased forehead, the graying hair—like elements rearranged by a ...w theme—were made to form a composition of hope, eagerness ...d guiltless serenity· the theme was deliverance

He did not rise when she entered—he looked as if he had not ...ite returned to the reality of the moment and had forgotten the ...oper routine—but he smiled at her with such simple benevolence

...hink-

...ier—

well

think

o the

"I didn't mind waiting," she said "I'm grateful that you gave me ...is appointment. I was extremely anxious to speak to you on a ...atter of urgent importance."

He leaned forward across the desk, with a look of attentive con-...entration ... of an important business

was a

had

He looked at her in silence, and then he said "Miss Tagg this is such a beautiful day—probably the last, this year There thing I've always wanted to do, but never had time for it. Let back to New York together and take one of those excursion b trips around the island of Manhattan Let's take a last look at greatest city in the world

She sat still trying to hold her eyes fixed in order to stop office from swaying This was the Ken Danagger who had never a personal friend had never married, had never attended a play a movie had never permitted anyone the impertinence of taking time for any concern but business

"Mr Danagger I came here to speak to you about a matter crucial importance to the future of your business and mine I c to speak to you about your indictment"

"Oh that? Don't worry about that. It doesn't matter I'm g to retire

She sat still feeling nothing, wondering numbly whether this how it felt to hear a death sentence one had dreaded but never quite believed possible

Her first movement was a sudden jerk of her head toward exit door she asked her voice low, her mouth distorted by hat Who was he?

Danagger laughed If you've guessed that much, you should guessed that it's a question I won't answer"

"Oh God Ken Danagger!" she moaned his words made realize that the barrier of hopelessness, of silence of unansw questions was already erected between them the hatred had only a thin wire that had held her for a moment and she broke its breaking Oh God!

"You're wrong kid he said gently "I know how you feel you're wrong then added more formally as if remembering proper manner as if still trying to balance himself between kinds of reality I'm sorry, Miss Taggart, that you had to c here so soon after"

"I came too late" she said "That's what I came here to pre I knew it would happen

"Why?

"I [illegible] is"

nst him"

[illegible] that you w torture yourself with regrets about the timing *that* could not been done"

She felt that with every passing minute he was moving away [illegible] ch him [illegible] she ha [illegible] intensi [illegible] voice [illegible] *were* hours ago! Do you remember what your mines meant to you

remember Taggart Transcontinental or Rearden Steel? In the ... -derstand?"

"Yes"

"Why?"

"That, I won't answer."

"You, who loved your work, who respected nothing but work, who despised every kind of aimlessness, passivity and renunciation—have you renounced the kind of life you loved?"

"No. I ..."

"... you going into the coal mining business somewhere else?"

"No, not into the coal mining business."

"Then what are you going to do?"

"I haven't decided that yet."

"Where are you going?"

"I won't answer."

She gave herself a moment's pause, to gather her strength, to tell herself: Don't feel, don't show him that you feel anything, don't let it cloud and break the bridge—then she said, in the same quiet, even voice, "Do you realize what your retirement will do to Hank Rearden, to me, to all the rest of us, whoever is left?"

"Yes. I realize it more fully than you do at present."

"And ..."

"... will not believe it and I will not explain, but I am not deserting you."

"We're being left to carry a greater burden, and you're indifferent to the knowledge that you'll see us destroyed by the looters."

"Don't be too sure of that."

"Of which? Your indifference or our destruction?"

"Of either."

"But you know, you knew it this morning, that it's a battle to the death, and it's we—you were one of us—against the looters."

"If I answer that *I* know it, but *you* don't—you'll think that I attach no meaning to my words. So take it as you wish, but *that* is my answer."

"Will you tell me the meaning?"

"No. It's for you to discover."

"You're willing to ... to the looters. We aren't."

veyed the impression that there were no secrets any longer and mystery need ever have existed

But as she watched him she saw the first break in his ... calm she saw him struggling against some thought he ... then said with effort About Hank Rearden Will you do ... a favor?

Of course

Will you tell him that I You see I've never cared ... people yet he was always the man I respected but I didn't ... until today that what I felt was that he was the only man ... ever loved Just tell him this and that I wish I could—as ... guess that's all I can tell him He'll probably damn me ... leaving still maybe he won't

I'll tell him

Hearing the dulled hidden sound of pain in his voice she felt ... close to him that it seemed impossible he would deliver the blow ... was delivering—and she made one last effort

Mr Danagger if I were to plead on my knees if I were to ... some sort of words that I haven't found—would there be there a chance to stop you?

"There isn't

After a moment she asked tonelessly When are you quitting?

"Tonight

Wh...

dow...

"...

wan...

"You're not going to dispose of it or appoint a successor?"

No What for?

"To leave it in good hands Couldn't you at least name an heir ... your own choice?

I haven't any choice It doesn't make any difference to me Want ... me to leave it all to you? He reached for a sheet of paper "I'll write a *letter* naming you sole heiress right now if you want ... to"

She shook her head in an involuntary recoil of horror "I'm no ... a *looter*

He chuckled pushing the paper aside "You see? You gave the right *answer* whether you knew it or not Don't worry about Danagger Coal It won't make any difference whether I appoint the best successor *in the* world or the worst or none No matter who takes it over now whether men or weeds it won't make any difference."

But to walk off and abandon just abandon an industrial enterprise as if we were in the age of landless nomads or of savages wandering in the *jungle!*"

"Aren't we? He was smiling at her half in mockery half in compassion "Why should I leave a deed or a will? I don't want to help the looters to pretend th... n... ... exists I am ... They do not ... ke it"

"Am I?"

She moaned, looking at the exit door, "What has he done to you?"

"He told me that I had the right to exist."

"I didn't believe it possible that in three hours one could make a

She rose to her feet She was about to speak—but suddenly he

w her stare ... shtray that stood

with the sign of

What's the matter, Miss Taggart?"

"Did *he* . . . did he smoke this?"

"Who?"

"Your caller— ...

yes I think I did see

see no that's not

... there any other visitors in this office today?

"No But why, Miss Taggart? What's the matter?"

"May I take this?"

"What? The cigarette butt?" He stared at her in bewilderment.

"Yes"

"Why, sure—but what for?"

She was looking down at the butt in the palm of her hand as if it were a jewel. "I don't know I don't know what good it will do me, except that it's a clue to'—she smiled bitterly— to a secret of my own."

She stood, reluctant to leave, looking at Ken Danagger in the manner of ... realm of no return

I won't say good

the not too distant

...e."

"Oh" she said eagerly holding his hand clasped across the desk, "are you going to return?"

"No You're going to join me"

* *

There was only a faint red breath above the structures in the ... breath

... to the pane ...

ered half a mile of structures as if he were trying to hold them
He was looking at a long wall of vertical strips which was th
h a brief gasp
ig out smoothly
It held still fo
the slice and
crumbled into a gondola waiting on the rails below

Danagger coal he thought These were the only words in h mind The rest was a feeling of loneliness so vast that even its ow pain seemed swallowed in an enormous void

Yesterday Dagny had told him the story of her futile attempt an given him Danagger s message This morning he had heard th news that Danagger had disappeared Through his sleepless nigh then through the taut concentration on the duties of the day h answer to the message had kept beating in his mind the answer h would never have a chance to utter

The only man I ever loved It came from Ken Danagger, wh had never expressed anything more personal than Look here Rea den " He thought Why had we let it go? Why had we both bee condemned—in the hours away from our desks—to an exile amon dreary strangers who had made us give up all desire for rest, fo friendship for the sound of human voices? Could I now reclaim single hour spent listening to my brother Philip and give it to Ke Danagger? Who made it our duty to accept as the only reward fo our work the gray torture of pretending love for those who rouse us to nothing but contempt? We who were able to melt rock an metal for our purpose why had we never sought that which w wanted from men?

He tried to choke the words in his mind knowing that it wa useless to think of them now But the words were there and the were like words addressed to the dead No I don t damn you fo leaving—if that is the question and the pain which you took awa with you Why didn t you give me a chance to tell you what that I approve? no but that I can neither blame you no follow you

Closing his eyes he permitted himself to experience for a momen the immense relief he would feel if he too were to walk off abandoning everything Under the shock of his loss he felt a thi thread of envy Wh ... hoever they are
o? Bu
wou
murde
ke him
away from his mills

It was late his staff had gone but he dreaded the road to hi house and the emptiness of the evening ahead He felt as if the enemy who had wiped out Ken Danag ... ng for him
lnerabl
ie from
him

le looked at the glittering white splashes on the dark windows of ructure in the distance, they were like motionless ripples of

s to see?

le thought—in bitter astonishment and for the first time—that joyous pride he had once felt, had come from his respect for , for the value of their admiration and their judgment He did feel it any longer. There were no men, he thought, to whose t he could wish to offer that sign.

ce

He threw the door open—and stopped A single lamp was burning in a corner of the dimmed anteroom The man who sat on the ge of a desk, in a pose of casual, patient waiting, was Francisco Anconia.

Rearden stood still and caught a brief instant when Francisco, not ving, looked at him with the hint of an amused smile that was e a wink between conspirators at a secret they both understood,

"For the same reason that has kept you so late in your office You re not working."

"How long have you been sitting here?"

"An hour or two "

"Why didn't you knock at my door?"

"Would you have allowed me to come in?"

"You're late in asking that question."

"Shall I leave, Mr. Rearden?"

Rearden pointed to the door of his office. "Come in"

sat down on the edge of his desk, crossed his arms, rancisco, who remained standing respectfully before him, and sked with the cold hint of a smile, "Why did you come here?"

You don t want me to answer, Mr Rearden You wouldn't a to me or to yourself how desperately lonely you are tonight If don t question me you won t feel obliged to deny it Just a what you do know anyway that I know it"

Taut like a string pulled by anger against the impertinence at end and by admiration for the frankness at the other Rearden swered I ll admit it if you wish What should it matter to me you know it?

That I know and care Mr Rearden I m the only man are you who does

Why should you care? And why should I need your help night?

Because it s not easy to have to damn the man who meant t to you

I wouldn t damn you if you d only stay away from me"

Franci co s eyes widened a little then he grinned and said was speaking of Mr Danagger"

For an instant Rearden looked as if he wanted to slap his face then he laughed softly and said, "All right Sit down"

u I don t The two words seemed to fall with a su emphasis they were pronounced very quietly almost cautiou with no remn nt of a smile on Francisco s face

No I don t try to prescribe how much a man should have bear If he broke it s not for me to judge him"

"If he broke ?

Well didn t he?

vas not a bs

sn

co looked at a steel bridge traced in black strokes aga red steam beyond the window, and said pointing "Every one those girders has a limit to the load it can carry What s yours"

Rearden laughed Is *that* what you're afraid of? Is that why came here? Were you afraid I d break? Did you want to save me Dagny Taggart wanted to save Ken Danagger? She tried to re him in time but couldn t

"She did? I didn t know it Miss Taggart and I d sagree ab many things"

"Don t worry I'm not going to vanish Let them all give up stop working I won t I don t know my limit and don t care A have to know is that I can't be stopped"

"Any man can be stopped Mr Rearden"

"How?"

"It s only a matter of knowing man s motive power"

"What is it?"

"You ought to know, Mr Rearden. You re one of the last mo men left to the world."

Rearden chuckled in bitter amusement "I've been called just about erything but that And you're wrong You have no idea how 'ong"

"Are you sure?"

"I ought to know Moral? What on earth made you say it?"

Francisco pointed to the mills beyond the window 'This

For a long moment, Rearden looked at him without moving, then ked only, What do you mean?'

"If you want to see an abstract principle, such as moral action in aterial form—there it is Look at it, Mr Rearden Every girder of , every pipe wire and valve was put there by a choice in answer the question right or wrong? You had to choose right and you ad to choose the best within your knowledge—the best for your urpose which was to make steel—and then move on and extend e knowledge, and do better, and still better, with your purpose as our standard of value You had to act on your own judgment you ad to have the capacity to judge the courage to stand on the erdict of your mind, and the purest, the most ruthless consecration

t with ice Millions of men, an entire nation were not able to deter ou from producing Rearden Metal—because you had the knowl dge of its superlative value and the power which such knowledge ives But what I wonder about Mr Rearden is why you live by ne code of principles when you deal with nature and by another when you deal with men?

Rearden's eyes were fixed on him so intently that the question came slowly, as if the effort to pronounce it were a distraction 'What do you mean?'

"Why d life as clearly and

e by its value to ict about the goal which your work and your steel are serving? What do you wish to achieve by giving your life to the making of steel? By what standard of value do you judge your days? For instance why d d you spend ten years of exacting effort to produce Rearden Metal?

Rearden
de
th

o d you that I understand it but you don t—would you throw me out of here?"

"I should have thrown you out of here anyway—so go ahead tell me what you mean"

"Are you proud of the rail of the John Galt Line?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because it s the best rail ever made."

"Why did you make it?"

"In order to make money"

"There were many easier ways to make money Why did you choose the hardest?

"You said it in your speech at Taggart's wedding in order to exchange my best effort for the best effort of others"

"If that was your purpose, have you achieved it?"

A beat of time vanished in a heavy drop of silence "No" said Rearden.

"Have you made any money?"

"No"

"When [illegible] to produce

[illegible]

warded for it?"

"Yes," said Rearden his voice low

"Then if you were punished, instead—what sort of code have you accepted?"

Rearden did not answer

[illegible]

[illegible] Rearden Metal [illegible]

[illegible]

When you felt proud of the rail of the John Galt Line said Francisco the measured rhythm of his voice giving a ruthless clarity to his words "what sort of men did you think of? Did you want to see that Line used by your equals—by giants of productive energy, such as Ellis Wyatt, whom [illegible] and still hig[illegible]

[illegible] used by men who could not equal the power of your mind but who would equal your moral integrity—men such as Eddie Willers—who could never invent your Metal, but who would do their best work as hard as you did live by their own effort, and—riding on your rail—give a moment's silent thanks to the man who gave them more than they could give him?

"Yes," said Rearden gently

"Did [illegible]

themsel[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] ar work and their need as a [illegible] all your effort, who demand that you

: them who demand that it be the aim of your life to : them who demand that your strength be the voiceless right unpaid unrewarded slave of their impotence who proclaim you are born to serfdom by reason of your genius while they born to rule by the grace of incompetence that yours is to give but theirs only to take that yours is to produce but s to consume that you are not to be paid neither in matter nor pirit neither by wealth nor by recognition nor by respect nor by itude—so that they would ride on your rail and sneer at you curse you since they owe you nothing not even the effort of ng off their hats wh ch you paid for? Would this be what you ited? Would you feel proud of it?

I d blast that rail first said Rearden his lips white

Then why don t you do it, Mr Rearden? Of the three kinds of a I described—which men are being destroyed and which are ig your Line today?"

They heard the d stant metal heartbeats of the mills through the g thread of silence

'What I described last said Francisco is any man who pro ims h s right to a single penny of another man s effort

Rearden d d not answer he was looking at the reflection of a on sign on dark windows in the distance

'You take pride in setting no limit to your endurance Mr Rear a because you th nk that you are doing right What if you aren t? hat if you re placing your virtue in the service of evil and letting it come a tool for the destruction of everything you love respect and mire? Why don t you uphold your own code of values among men you do among iron smelters? You who won t allow one per cent impurity into an alloy of metal—what have you allowed into ur moral code?

Rearden sat very still the words in his mind were like the beat of eps down the trail he had been seeking the words were the sanc on of the victim

"You who would not submit to the hardships of nature but set out conquer it and placed it in the service of your joy and your com rt—to what have you submitted at the hands of men? You who now from your work that one bears punishment only for being rong—what have you been willing to bear and for what reason? ll your life you have heard yourself denounced not for your aults, but for your greatest virtues You have been hated not for our mistakes but for your achievements You have been scorned or all those qualities of character which are your highest pride

u cruel for your unyielding integrity You ... nti-social for the vision that made you venture upon t n discovered oads Yo ... he st ength and self d sci ... n called greedy ... h You who ve ... n called a p

site You, who've created abundance where there had been nothing but wastelands and helpless starving men before you have been called a robber You who've kept them all alive, have been called an exploiter You the purest and most moral man among them, have been sneered at as a 'vulgar materialist' Have you stopped to

to deal with nature but you thought that you needed no such w to deal with men You left the deadliest weapon in the hands of your enemies a weapon you never suspected or understood Their moral code is their weapon Ask yourself how deeply and in how ... elf what it is that

exist

tand-

lrawn

cause

I'm the first man who has given you what the whole world owes you and what you should have demanded of all men before you dealt with them a moral sanction"

Rearden whirled to him, then remained still, with a stillness like a gasp Francisco leaned forward, as if he were reaching the landing of a dangerous flight and his eyes were steady, but their glance seemed to tremble with intensity

"You're guilty of a great sin, Mr Rearden much guiltier than they tell you but not in the way they preach. The worst guilt is to accept an undeserved guilt—and that is what you have been doing all your life You have been paying blackmail, not for your vices, but for your virtues You have been willing to carry the load of an unearned punishment—and to let it grow the heavier the greater the virtues you practiced. But your virtues were those which keep men alive. Your own moral code—the one you lived by, but never stated acknowledged or defended—was the code that preserves man's existence If you were punished for it, what was the nature of those ... then is theirs

purpose

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know it

to nam

man's motive power? Man's motive power is his moral code Ask yourself where their code is leading you and what it offers you as your final goal. A viler evil than to murder a man, is to sell him ... nto

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...ltem, you must support them because they cannot survive without you Consider the obscenity of offering their impotence and their need—their need of *you*—as a justification for your tortu

re you willing to accept it? Do you care to purchase—at the price f your great endurance, at the price of your agony—the satisfaction of the needs of your own destroyers?'

"No!"

"Mr Rearden," said Francisco, his voice solemnly calm, "if you

st of his strength, and the greater his effort the heavier the world ore down upon his shoulders—what would you tell him to do?"

"I . . don't know. What . . . could he do? What would *you* ell him?"

"To shrug."

The clatter of the metal came in a flow of irregular sounds without discernible rhythm, not like the action of a mechanism, but as f some conscious impulse were behind every sudden, tearing rise hat want

face the gaunt figure on the edge of the desk was erect, the cold blue eyes showed nothing but the intensity of a glance fixed upon a great distance, only the inflexible mouth betrayed a line drawn by pain

"Go on," said Rearden with effort, "continue You haven't finished, have you?"

"I have ... hard.

I want you to an- your burden, how can you . . ."

The scream of an alarm siren shattered the space beyond the window and shot like a rocket in a long, thin line to the sky It held for an instant, then fell, then went on in rising falling spirals of sound ... louder. It wa of

h

as an instant late, be the blast of the same ... press on the

oor, Francisco was out, racing to meet the sound of the call for help Rearden had thought himself a good runner but he could not keep up with the swift figure streaking off through stretches of red glare and darkness, the figure of a useless playboy he had hated himself for admiring

The stream, gushing from a hole low on the side of a blast fur-

nace, did not have the red glow of fire, but the white radiance of sunlight It poured along the ground, branching off at random in sudden streaks, it cut through a dank fog of steam with a bright suggestion of morning It was liquid iron, and what the scream of the alarm proclaimed was a break-out.

The charge of the furnace had been hung up and, breaking, had blown the tap hole open The furnace foreman lay knocked unconscious, the white flow spurted, slowly tearing the hole wider, and men were struggling with sand, hose and fire clay to stop the glowing streaks that spread in a heavy, gliding motion, eating everything on their way into jets of acrid smoke.

In the few moments which Rearden needed to grasp the sight and nature of the disaster, he saw a man's figure rising suddenly at the foot of the furnace a figure outlined by the red glare almost as if it stood in the path of the torrent, he saw the swing of a white shirt sleeved arm that rose and flung a black object into the source of the spurting metal It was Francisco d'Anconia, and his action belonged to an art which Rearden had not believed any man to be trained to perform any longer

Years before, Rearden had worked in an obscure steel plant in Minnesota, where it had been his job, after a blast furnace was tapped, to close the hole by hand—by throwing bullets of fire clay [illegible] taken [illegible] n of [illegible] uch, [illegible] nent and methods of a distant past Rearden had done the job, but in the years since, he had met no other man able to do it In the midst of shooting jets of live steam in the face of a crumbling blast furnace, he was now seeing the tall, slim figure of the playboy performing the task with the skill of an expert.

It took an instant for Rearden to tear off his coat, seize a pair of goggles from the first man in sight and join Francisco at the mouth of the furnace There was no time to speak, to feel or to wonder Francisco glanced at him once—and what Rearden saw was a smudged face, black goggles and a wide grin

They stood on a slippery bank of baked mud, at the edge of the white stream, with the raging hole under their feet, flinging clay into the glare where the twisting tongues that looked like gas were boiling metal Rearden's consciousness became a progression of [illegible] down and, before [illegible] xt one [illegible] of his [illegible] feet, to [illegible] sum of [illegible] of his body's precision, of its response to his will And, with no time to know it, but knowing it, seizing it with his senses past the censorship of his mind he was seeing a black silhouette with red rays shooting from behind its shoulders, its elbows, its angular curves red rays circling through steam like the long needles of spot

fights, following the movements of a swift, expert, confident being

[illegible] hes under the

plain, but he

was what he

refusal to submit to disaster, the irresistible drive to fight it, the triumphant feeling of his own ability to win He was certain that

death. Sparks hung about their feet and burst in sudden sheafs out of the metal, dying unnoticed against their clothes, against the skin of their hands. The stream was coming slower, in broken spurts through the dam rising beyond their sight

It happ [illegible]

young man with a look of chronic hurt and [illegible] gether, rushed up to him, crying, "I couldn't help it, Mr Rearden

and launched into a speech of explanation Rearden turned his back on him without a word It was the assistant in charge of the pressure gauge of the furnace a young man out of college

Somewhere on the outer edge of Rearden s consciousness there was the thought that accidents of this nature were happening more frequently now, caused by the kind of ore he was using but he had to use whatever ore he could find. There was the thought that his old workers had always been able to avert disaster any of them would have seen the indications of a hang up and known how to prevent it, but there were not many of them left, and he had to employ whatever men he could find Through the swirling coils of steam around him he observed that it was the older men who had rushed from all over the mills to fight the break-out and now stood in line, being given first aid by the medical staff He wondered what was happening to the young men of the country But the wonder was swallowed by the sight of the college boy s face which he could not bear to see, by a wave of contempt, by the wordless thought that if *this* was the enemy there was nothing to fear All these things came to him and vanished in the outer darkness the sight blotting them out was Francisco d Anconia

He saw Francisco giving orders to the men around him They did not know who he was or where he came from but they listened they knew he was a man who knew his job Francisco broke off in the middle of a sentence seeing Rearden approach and listen, and said, laughing Oh I beg your pardon!" Rearden said, "Go right ahead [illegible]

[illegible] alked together [illegible] Rearden felt [illegible] he wanted, [illegible] who had learned a secret Franc [illegible] his face once in a whil [illegible]

After a while Franc [illegible] you" was in the way he said it.

Rearden chuckled You saved my furnace."

They went [illegible] glare [illegible] of mo [illegible] dema [illegible] saw a face made lifeless by an odd dejection.

"Are you hurt?"

"No no not at all"

"Come here" ordered Rearden opening the door of his bathroom.

"Look at yourself"

"Never mind You come here"

For the first time, Rearden felt that he was the older man, he felt

pleasure of taking Francisco in charge, he felt a confident, ...sed, paternal protectiveness He washed the grime off Fran-

...rancisco shrugged "I was brought up around smelters of every ...d," he answered indifferently

...earden could not decipher the expression of his face it was only ...ok of peculiar stillness, as if his eyes were fixed on some secret ...on of his own that drew his mouth into a line of desolate bitter, ...ting self mockery

They did not speak until they were back in the office

"You know," said Rearden, "everything you said here was true. ...t that was only part of the story The other part is what we ve ...e tonight. Don't you see? We're able to act. They re not. So it s ... who'll win in the long run, no matter what they do to us

Francisco did not answer

"Listen," said Rearden, "I know what s been the trouble with you. ...u've never cared to do a real day's work in your life I thought ...u were conceited enough but I see that you have no idea of what ...u've got in you. Forget that fortune of yours for a while and come ... work for me. I'll start you as furnace foreman any time You ...n't know what it will do for you In a few years you'll be ready ... appreciate and to run d Anconia Copper"

He expected a burst of laughter and he was prepared to argue, ...stead, he saw Francisco shaking his head slowly as if he could not ...st his voice as if he feared that were he to speak, he would ac...pt. In a moment, he said, "Mr Rearden I think I would give ...e rest of my life for one year as your furnace foreman But I ...n't."

"Why not?"

"Don't ask me It's . a personal matter"

The vision of Francisco in Rearden s mind which he had resented ...d found irresistibly attractive had been the figure of a man radi...ally incapable of suffering What he saw now in Francisco s eyes ...as the look of a quiet, tightly controlled patiently borne torture

Francisco reached silently for his overcoat

"You're not leaving are you?" asked Rearden.

"Yes."

"Aren't you going to finish what you had to tell me?"

"Not tonight."

"You wanted me to answer a question. What was it?"

... How can I—what?" ...am the only moan he ...earden I *know* it."

Chapter IV THE SANCTION OF THE VICTIM

The roast turkey had cost $30 The champagne had cost $25 The lace tablecloth a cobweb of grapes and vine leaves iridescent in the
candlelig
sign bur
cost $2,5
wreaths
to think

A pea
filled wi
into pumpkins that were cut as open mouthed faces drooling
nuts and candy upon the tablecloth.

It was Thanksgiving dinner, and the three who faced Rearden about the table were his wife, his mother and his brother

"This is the night to thank the Lord for our blessings" said Rearden s mother "God has been kind to us There are people all over the country who haven t got any food in the house tonight, and some that haven t even got a house, and more of them going jobless every day Gives me the creeps to look around in the city Why, onl
Henr
ts, up
ly abo
rk mu
ps to s

what she s come to—just a toothless old bag wrapped in a man overcoat, panhandling on a street corner And I thought Th could ve been me but for the grace of God"

"Well, if thanks are in order," said Lillian gaily, "I think that shouldn't forget Gertrude the new cook. She's an artist."

"Me, I m just going to be old fashioned," said Philip "I'm going to thank the sweetest mother in the world"

"Well for the matter of that," said Rearden's mother, "we ou to thank Lillian for this dinner and for all the trouble she took make it so pretty She spent hours fixing the table It s real qua and different."

"It s the wooden shoe that does it," said Philip, bending his he sidewise to study it in a manner of critical appreciation "That s real touch Anybody can have candles, silverware and junk, doesn t take anything but money—but this shoe that took though

Rearden said nothing The candlelight moved over his motionl face as over a portrait the portrait bore an expression of imperso courtesy

"You haven't touched your wine," said his mother, looking him "What I think is you ought to drink a toast in gratitude to people of this country who have given you so much"

"Henry is not in the mood for it, Mother," said Lillian "I'm af Thanksgiving is a holiday only for those who have a clear c science" She raised her wine glass, but stopped it halfway to lips and asked "You re not going to make some sort of stan your trial tomorrow, are you, Henry?"

am."

e put the glass down "What are you going to do?"

You'll see it tomorrow"

You don t really imagine that you can get away with it!"

I don t know what you have in mind as the object I'm to get y with."

Do you realize that the charge against you is extremely serious?"

I do"

You've admitted that you sold the Metal to Ken Danagger"

I have."

They might send you to jail for ten years"

I don't think they will, but it s possible"

Have you been reading the newspapers, Henry?" asked Philip, h an odd kind of smile

'No"

'Oh, you should!"

'Should I? Why?"

"You ought to see the names they call you!"

"That s interesting," said Rearden, he said it about the fact that ilip s smile was one of pleasure.

"I don't understand it," said his mother "Jail? Did you say jail, llian? Henry, are you going to be sent to jail?"

"I might be."

"But that's ridiculous! Do something about it."

"What?"

"I don't know I don't understand any of it. Respectable people n't go to jail. Do something You've always known what to do out business"

f a frightened,

smiled coldly, rning to Rearden. "Don t you think that your attitude is perfectly utile?"

"No"

"You know that cases of this kind are not intended ever to

"Well, then I don't see how you can pretend that you re some sort of victim If you go to jail it will be your own fault."

"What pretense are you talking about, Lillian?"

"Oh, I know that you think you re fighting for some sort of

ple—but actually it s only a matter of your incredible conce t You're doing it for no better reason than because you think you're right."

"Do you think they re right?"

She shrugged 'That s the conceit I m talking about—the idea that it matters who s right or wrong It s the most insufferable form of vanity this insistence on always doing right How do you know what s right? How can anyone ever know it? It s nothing but a de u- s on to flatter your own ego and to hurt other people by flaunting your superiority over them

He was look ng at her with attentive interest "Why should it hurt other people if it s nothing but a delusion?"

Is it necessary for me to point out that in *your* case it s nothing but hypocrisy? That is why I find your attitude preposterous Ques tions of right have no bearing on human existence And you're certainly noth ng but human—aren t you Henry? You re no bette than any of the men you re going to face tomorrow I think yo should remember that it s not for you to make a stand on any so of princ ple Maybe you re a victim in this particular mess mayt they re pulling a rotten trick on you but what of it? They re doi it because they re weak they couldn t resist the temptation to gr your Metal and to muscle in on your profits because they had i other way of ever gett ng rich Why should you blame them? It s or a quest on of different strains but it s the same shoddy hum fabric that gives way just as quickly You wouldn t be tempted money because it s so easy for you to make it But you would w thstand other pressures and you d fall just as ignominious Wouldn t you? So you have no right to any r ghteous ind gnat against them You have no moral superiority to assert or to defe And if you haven t then what is the point of fighting a battle t you can t win? I suppose that one might find some satisfaction being a martyr if one is above reproach But you—who are you cast the first stone?

She paused to observe the effect There was none except that look of attentive interest seemed intensified he listened as if were held by some impersonal scientific curiosity It was not response she had expected

"I believe you understand me" she said

"No" he ... "

...erfect

...uld ...

...t Th...

i e day of human ty in a much deeper sense than you imag Human beings are no longer expected to be saints nor to be ... ished for their sins Nobody is right or wrong we re all in it toget we re all human—and the human is the imperfect You'll ... noth ng tomorrow by proving that they re wrong You ought to in w th good ... ng to

You ou... ng Th...

appreciate ... ke co...

s ons for ... nd tak...

That s the po cy of our age—and it s time you accepted it. I

ll me you're too good for it. You know that you're not. You know at I know it."

The look of his eyes, held raptly still upon some point in space, as not in answer to her words; it was in answer to a man's voice ying to him, "Do you think that what you're facing is merely a onspiracy to seize your wealth? You, who know the source of ealth, should know it's much more and much worse than that."

[illegible]

er studied reminders of his guilt on every evening he had spent at ome in the past three months. But guilt had been the one emotion e had found himself unable to feel. The punishment she had

[illegible]

verdict. She wanted to injure him by her contempt—but he could

[illegible]

[illegible] his compassion. Her only power was the power of his own virtues. What if he chose to withdraw it?

An issue of guilt, he thought, had to rest on his own acceptance of the code of [illegible]

concern for any verdict she chose to pass upon him he had lost respect for her judgment long ago And the sole chain still holding him was only a last remnant of pity

But what was the code on which she acted? What sort of code permitted the concept of a punishment that required the victim's own virtue as the fuel to make it work? A code—he thought—which would destroy only those who tried to observe it, a punishment, from which only the honest would suffer, while the dishonest would escape unhurt. Could one conceive of an infamy lower than to equate virtue with pain to make virtue, not vice the source and motive power of suffering? If he were the kind of rotter she was struggling to make him believe he was, then no issue of his honor and his moral worth would matter to him. If he wasn't, then what was the nature of her attempt?

To count upon his virtue and use it as an instrument of torture, to practice blackmail with the victim's generosity as sole means of

extortion to accept the gift of a man s good will and turn it into a tool for the giver s destruction . . he sat very still contemplating the formula of so monstrous an evil that he was able to name it, but not to believe it possible

He sat very still held by the hammering of a single question Did Lillian know the exact nature of her scheme?—was it a conscious policy devised with full awareness of its meaning? He shuddered; he did not hate her enough to believe it

He looked at her She was absorbed, at the moment, in the task of

ing and rejecting for three months, that her vengeance was ho form of despair as he had supposed—the impression, which he re garded as inconceivable that she was enjoying it He could find no trace of pain in her manner She had an air of confidence new t her She seemed to be at home in her house for the first time Eve though everything within the house was of her own choice and taste, she had always seemed to act as the bright, efficient, resentful man ager of a high class hotel who keeps smiling in bitter amusement at her position of inferiority to the owners The amusement remained, but the bitterness was gone She had not gained weight, but her features had lost their delicate sharpness in a blurring softening look of satisfaction even her voice sounded as if it had grown plump

He did not hear what she was saying she was laughing in the last flicker of the blue flames while he sat weighing the question Did she know? He felt certain that he had discovered a secret much greater than the problem of his marriage, that he had grasped the formula of a policy practiced more widely throughout the world than he dared to contemplate at the moment But to convict a human being of that practice was a verdict of irrevocable damnation and he knew that he would not believe it of anyone, so long as the possibility of a doubt remained

No—he thought looking at Lillian, with the last effort of his generosity—he would not believe it of her In the name of whatever grace and pride she possessed—in the name of such moments when he had seen a smile of joy on her face, the smile of a living being—in the name of the brief shadow of love he had once felt for her—he would not pronounce upon her a verdict of total evil.

The butler slipped a plate of plum pudding in front of him and he heard Lillian s voice Where have you been for the last five minutes Henry—or is it for the last century? You haven t answered me. You haven t heard a word I said "

"I heard it " he answered quietly "I don t know what you re trying to accomplish."

'What a question!" said his mother. "Isn't that just like a man?

ude of yours The men who're going to try you, know what re thinking That's why they'll crack down on you, while they'd another man off"

Why, no I don't think they know what I'm thinking That's what ave to let them know tomorrow."

Unless you show them that you're willing to give in and co-rate, you won't have a chance. You've been too hard to deal h."

'No I've been too easy"

'But if they put you in jail," said his mother, "what's going to ppen to your family? Have you thought of that?"

'No I haven't."

[illegible]

[illegible], I think you have a very provincial attitude, all of you," said ilip suddenly. "Nobody here seems to be concerned with the ider, social aspects of the case. I don't agree with you Lillian I n't see why you say that they're pulling some sort of rotten trick Henry and that he's in the right I think he's guilty as hell other, I can explain the issue to you very simply There's nothing nusual about it, the courts are full of cases of this kind Business en are taking advantage of the national emergency in order to ake money They break the regulations which protect the common elfare of all—for the sake of their own personal gain They're rofiteers of the black market who grow rich by defrauding the oor of [illegible] They

Rearden sat looking at him, as if studying an object seen for the first time. Somewhere deep in Rearden's mind, as a steady, gentle,

inexorable beat was a man's voice, saying By what right?—by what code?—by what standard?

"Philip he said not raising his voice, "say any of that and you will find yourself out in the street, right now with the suit you've got on your back with whatever change you've got in your pocket and with nothing else."

He he
stillness
The look
sudden
known t
outcries
they knew
that they h

"You
street would you his mother said at last, it was not a
but a plea

"I would"

"But he's your brother Doesn't that mean anything to you?"

"No"

"Maybe he goes a bit too far at times, but it's just loose talk, it
just that ... he's saying"

an you and
way! I've never see
... him. You know that
he needs you"

"Does he know it?"

"You can't be hard on a man who needs you, it will prey on your conscience for the rest of your life"

"It won't"

"You've got to be kind, Henry"

"I'm not"

"You've got to have some pity"

"I haven't"

"A good man knows how to forgive"

"I don't"

"You wouldn't want me to think that you're selfish."

"I am"

Philip's eyes were darting from one to the other He looked like a man who had felt certain that he stood on solid granite and had suddenly discovered that it was thin ice, now cracking open all around him

"But I" he tried and stopped his voice sounded like a step testing the ice But don't I have any freedom of speech?

"In your own house Not in mine"

"Don't I have any right ..."

"Yes. The fact that it's *my* money"
"Don't you want to consider any hi "—he was going to say higher" but changed his mind—"any other aspects?
"No"
"But I'm not your slave."
"Am I yours?"
"I don't know what you—" He stopped he knew what was meant
"No" said Rearden "you're not my slave You're free to walk out of here any time you choose"
"I I'm not speaking of that."
"I am"
"I don't understand it "
"Don't you?"
"You've always known my my political views You've never objected before"
"That's true" said Rearden gravely "Perhaps I owe you an explanation, if I have misled you I've tried never to remind you that you're living on my charity I thought that it was your place to remember it. I thought that any human being who accepts the help of another knows that good will is the giver's only motive and that good will is the payment he owes in return But I see that I was wrong You were getting your food unearned and you concluded that affection did not have to be earned either You concluded that I was the safest person in the world for you to spit on precisely because I held you by the throat You concluded that I wouldn't want to remind you of it and that I would be tied by the fear of hurting your feelings All right let's get it straight you're an object of charity who's exhausted his credit long ago Whatever affection I might have felt for you once is gone I haven't the slightest interest in you your fate or your future I haven't any reason whatever for wishing to feed you If you leave my house it won't make any difference to me whether you starve or not Now *that* is your position here and I will expect you to remember it if you wish to stay If not then get out."
But for the movement of drawing his head a little into his shoulders Philip showed no reaction "Don't imagine that I enjoy living here" he said his voice was lifeless and shrill If you think I'm happy you're mistaken I'd give anything to get away" The words pertained to defiance but the voice had a curiously cautious quality "If that is how you feel about it, it would be best for me to leave" The words were a statement but the voice put a question mark at the end of it and waited there was no answer You needn't worry about my future I don't have to ask favors of anybody I can take care of myself all right" The words were addressed to Rearden but the eyes were looking at his mother she did not speak she was afraid to move "I've always wanted to be on my own I've always wanted to live in New York near all my friends" The voice slowed down and added in an i[illegible] the words were not addressed to [illegible]
maintaining a certain [illegible]
be embarrassed by a [illegible]

". . . I would need enough money for a year or two . . . to establish myself in a manner suitable to my—"

"You won't get it from me."

"I wasn't asking you for it, was I? Don't imagine that I couldn't get it somewhere else, if I wanted to! Don't imagine that I couldn't leave! I'd go in a minute, if I had only myself to think about. But Mother needs me, and if I deserted her—"

"Don't explain."

"And besides, you misunderstood me, Henry. I haven't said anything to insult you. I wasn't speaking in any personal way. I was

as if they had witnessed nothing; they held no spark of excitement, no personal sensation, neither of defiance nor of regret, neither of shame nor of suffering; they were filmy ovals that held no response to reality, no attempt to understand it, to weigh it, to reach some verdict of justice—ovals that held nothing but a dull, still, mindless hatred. "Don't explain. Just keep your mouth shut."

The revulsion that made Rearden turn his face away contained a spasm of pity. There was an instant when he wanted to seize his brother's shoulders

He noted, in weary ... the table remained silent. Through a ... had brought him not ... Where was their ... their code of justice—if justice had been any part of their code. *Why didn't* they throw at him all those accusations of cruelty and selfishness, which he had come to accept as the eternal chorus to his life? What had permitted them to do it for years? He knew that the words he heard in his mind were the key to the answer: The sanction of the victim.

"Don't let's quarrel," said his mother, her voice cheerless and vague. "It's Thanksgiving Day."

When he looked at Lillian, he caught a glance that made him certain she had watched him for a long time: its quality was panic.

He got up. "You will please excuse me now," he said to the table at large.

"Where are you ...

He ...

the ... confirm

Sh...

"...

"You can't go to New York tonight ... not loud, but it had the imperious bel... when you can afford it ... mean. You ought to th...

ot in a position to permit yourself anything which you know to be lepravity."

By what code?—thought Rearden—by what standard?

"Why do you wish to go to New York tonight?'

"I think, Lillian, for the same reason that makes you wish to stop me"

"Tomorrow is your trial."

u ought of his family was replaced by the thought of his encounter with the Wet Nurse, the Washington boy of his mills

At the time of his indictment, he had discovered that the boy had known about his deal with Danagger, yet had not reported it to anyone. "Why didn't you inform your friends about me?" he had asked.

The boy had answered brusquely, not looking at him, "Didn't want to"

"It was part of your job to watch precisely for things of that kind, wasn't it?"

"Yeah"

"Besides your friends would have been delighted to hear it"

"I know"

"Then why didn't you make use of it?"

"I didn't want to."

"Why not?"

"Don't know"

The boy had stood, glumly avoiding Rearden's avoid something incomprehensible within himself laughed, "Listen, Non Absolute, you're playing w

and murder somebody fast before you let it get you—that reason that stopped you from turning informer—or else it will blast your career to hell"

The boy had not answered.

This morning Rearden had gone to his office as usual even

"What are you doing here today?" Rearden had asked. "Don't you know it's a holiday?

"Oh I let the girls off but I just came in to finish some business."

"What business?"

"Oh letters and Oh hell I signed three letters and sharpened my pencils I know I didn't have to do it today but I had nothing to do at home and I get lonesome away from this place"

"Don't you have any family?"

"No not to speak of What about you Mr Rearden? Don't you have any?

I guess—not to speak of"

I like this place I like to hang around You know Mr Rearden what I studied to be was a metallurgist"

Walking away Rearden had turned to glance back and had caught the Wet Nurse looking after him as a boy would look at the hero of his childhood's favorite adventure story God help the poor little bastard!—he had thought.

God help them all—he thought driving through the dark streets of a small town borrowing in contemptuous pity the words of their belief which he had never shared He saw newspapers displayed on metal stands with the black letters of headlines screaming to empty corners Railroad Disaster" He had heard the news on the radio that afternoon there had been a wreck on the main line of Taggart Transcontinental near Rockland, Wyoming a split rail had sent a freight train crashing over the edge of a canyon. Wrecks on the Taggart main line were becoming more frequent—the track was wearing out—the track which less than eighteen months ago Dagny was planning to rebuild promising him a journey from coast to coast on his own Metal

She had spent a year picking worn rail from abandoned branches to patch the rail of the main line She had spent months fighting the men of Jim's Board of Directors who said that the national emergency was only temporary and a track that had lasted for ten years could well last for another winter until spring when conditions would improve as Mr Wesley Mouch had promised Three weeks ago she had made them authorize the purchase of sixty thousand tons of new rail it could do no more than make a few patches across the continent in the worst divisions but it was all she had been able to obtain from them She had had to wrench the money out of men deaf with panic the freight revenues were falling at such

[illegible]

Rearden looked away from the headlines to the glow at the edge of the sky, which was the city of New York far ahead, his hands tightened on the wheel a little.

It was half past nine when he reached the city. Dagny's apartment was dark, when he let himself in with his key. He picked up the telephone and called her office. Her own voice answered. "Taggart Transcontinental."

"Don't you know it's a holiday?" he asked.

"Hello, Hank. Railroads have no holidays. Where are you calling from?"

"Your place."

"I'll be through in another half-hour."

"It's all right. Stay there. I'll come for you."

The anteroom of her office was dark, when he entered, except for the lighted glass cubbyhole of Eddie Willers. Eddie was closing his desk, getting ready to leave. He looked at Rearden, in puzzled astonishment.

"Good evening, Eddie. What is it that keeps you people so busy—the Rockland wreck?"

Eddie sighed. "Yes, Mr. Rearden."

"That's what I want to see Dagny about—about your rail."

"She's still here."

He started toward her door, when Eddie called after him hesitantly, "Mr. Rearden . . ."

He stopped. "Yes?"

"I wanted to say . . . because tomorrow is your trial . . . and whatever they do to you is supposed to be in the name of all the people . . . I just wanted to say that I . . . that it won't be in *my* name . . . even if there's nothing I can do about it, except to tell you . . . even if I know that that doesn't mean anything."

"It means much more than you suspect. Perhaps more than any of us suspect. Thanks, Eddie."

Dagny glanced up from her desk, when Rearden entered her office; he saw her watching him as he approached and he saw the look of weariness disappearing from her eyes. He sat down on the edge of the desk. She leaned back, brushing a strand of hair off her face, her shoulders relaxing under her thin white blouse.

"Dagny, there's something I want to tell you about the rail that you ordered. I want you to know this tonight."

She was watching him attentively; the expression of his face pulled hers into the same look of quietly solemn tension.

"I am supposed to deliver to Taggart Transcontinental, on February fifteenth, sixty thousand tons of rail, which is to be [illegible] hundred miles of track. You will receive—for the [illegible] money—eighty thousand tons of rail, which will give [illegible] miles of track. You know what material is cheaper [illegible] steel. Your rail will not be steel, it will be Rearden [illegible]

object or agree I am not asking for your consent You are not supposed to consent or to know anything about it. *I* am doing this and I alone will be responsible We will work it so that those on your staff who'll know that you've ordered steel, won't know that

body, except on me They might suspect that I bribed someone on your staff, or they might suspect that you were in on it, but they won't be able to prove it I want you to give me your word that you will never admit it, no matter what happens It's *my* Metal, and if there are any chances to take, it's I who'll take them. I have been planning this from the day I received your order I have ordered the copper for it, from a source which *will not* betray me. I did not intend to tell you about it till later, but I changed my mind. I want you to know it tonight—because I am going on trial tomorrow for the same kind of crime"

She had listened without moving At his last sentence, he saw a faint contraction of her cheeks and lips, it was not quite a smile, but it gave him her whole answer pain, admiration, understanding.

Then he saw her eyes becoming softer, more painfully, dangerously alive—he took her wrist, as if the tight grasp of his fingers and the severity of his glance were to give her the support she needed—and he said sternly "Don't thank me—this is not a favor—I am doing it in order to be able to bear my work, or else I'll break like Ken Danagger'

She whispered 'All right Hank, I won't thank you' the tone of her voice and the look of her eyes making it a lie by the time it was uttered

He smiled. "Give me the word I asked"

She inclined her head I give you my word" He released her

all. We

appen to

a bar on

"Do you think you could steal a drink for me, if he doesn't have it locked?"

"I'll try"

He stood looking at the portrait of Nat Taggart on the wall of her office—the portrait of a young man with a lifted head—until she returned, bringing a bottle of brandy and two glasses He filled the in silence

"You know, Dagny, Thanksgiving was a holiday established by roductive people to celebrate the success of their work "

The movement of his arm, as he raised his glass went from the ortrait—to her—to himself—to the buildings of the city beyond the indow

* *

For a month in advance, the people who filled the courtroom had een told by the press that they would see the man who was a greedy nemy of society, but they had come to see the man who had in ented Rearden Metal.

He stood up, when the judges called upon him to do so He wore a [illegible]

[illegible]

round him.

The crowd knew from the newspapers that he represented the vil of ruthless wealth, and—as they praised the virtue of chastity, hen ran to see any movie that displayed a half naked female on its osters—so they came to see him, evil, at least, did not have the tale hopelessness of a bromide which none believed and none lared to challenge They looked at him without admiration— dmiration was a feeling they had lost the capacity to experience, ong ago, they looked with curiosity and with a dim sense of de- iance against those who had told them that it was their duty to ate him.

A few years ago, they would have jeered at his air of self-con- ident wealth. But today, there was a slate gray sky in the windows of the courtroom, which promised the first snowstorm of a long, ard winter; the last of the country s oil was vanishing and the oal mines were not able to keep up with the hysterical scramble or winter supplies The crowd in the courtroom remembered that his was the case which had cost them the services of Ken Danag ger There were rumors that the output of the Danagger Coal Company had fallen perceptibly within one month the news apers said that it was merely a matter of readjustment while Danagger's cousin was reorganizing the company he had taken ver Last week, the front pages had carried the story of a catastrophe on the site of a housing project under construction defective steel irders had collapsed, killing four workmen the newspapers had not mentioned, but the crowd knew, that the girders had come from Orren Boyle s Associated Steel

They sat in the courtroom in heavy silence and they looked at the tall [illegible]

[illegible]

The newspapers had snarled that the cause of the country's trou- bles, as this case demonstrated, was the selfish greed of rich in- dustrialists, that it was men like Hank Rearden who were to blame

for the shrinking diet the falling temperature and the cracking roof in the homes of the nation that if it had not been for men who

- Hank his l... "prof...

The crowd remembered that these same newspapers less than two years ago had screamed that the production of Rearden Metal should be forbidden because its producer was endangering people's lives for the sake of his greed they remembered that the man in gray had ridden in the cab of the first engine to run over a track of his own Metal and that he was now on trial for the greedy crime of withholding from the public a load of the Metal which it had been his greedy crime to offer in the public market.

According to the procedure established by directives cases of this kind were not tried by a jury but by a panel of three judges appointed by the Bureau of Economic Planning and National Resources the procedure the directives had stated was to be informal and democratic The judge s bench had been removed from the old Philadelphia courtroom for this occasion, and replaced by a table on a wooden platform it gave the room an atmosphere suggestive of the kind of meeting where a presiding body puts something over on a mentally retarded membership

One of the judges acting as prosecutor, had read the charge "You may now offer whatever plea you wish to make in your own defense " he announced

Facing the platform his voice inflectionless and peculiarly clear Hank Rearden answered

I have no defense

"Do you—" The judge stumbled he had not expected it to be that easy Do you throw yourself upon the mercy of this court?"

"I do not recognize this court s right to try me"

"What?

try t

"But you have admitted that you have broken our regulations controlling the sale of your Metal

I do not recognize your right to control the sale of my Metal

"Is it necessary for me to point out that your recognition was not required?

"No I am fully aware of it and I am acting accordingly"

He noted the stillness of the room By the rules of the complicated pretense which all those people played for one another's benefit they should have considered his stand as incomprehensible for there should have been rustles of astonishment and derision there were none they sat still they understood

"Do you mean that you are refusing to obey the law?" asked judge

No I am complying with the law—to the letter Your law holds my life, my work and my property may be disposed of without consent. Very well, you may now dispose of me without my icipation in the matter I will not play the part of defending elf, where no defense is possible, and I will not simulate the

you are to
case and to

prisoner brought to trial can defend himself only if there is an ctive principle of justice recognized by his judges, a principle olding his rights, which they may not violate and which he can ke The law, by which you are trying me holds that there are principles, that I have no rights and that you may do with me tever you please Very well Do it."

d on the

d by a code of moral values and that no man had the right to t his good through the violation of the rights of another If it ow believed that my fellow men may sacrifice me in any manner please for the sake of whatever they deem to be their own d, if they believe that they may seize my property simply be se they need it—well, so does any burglar There is only this erence the burglar does not ask me to sanction his act"

of his words would determine the course of her life Eddie lers sat beside her James Taggart had not come Paul Larkin sat iched forward, his face thrust out, pointed like an animal's zzle, sharpened by a look of fear now turning into malicious red Mr Mowen, who sat beside him was a man of greater in ence and smaller understanding, his fear was of a simpler nature, and he whispered to Larkin,

"What . what do you mean?"
"I hold that there is no clash of interests among men who do not

sary to

time it

"Any other method of curtailing profits is the method of looters—and I recognize it as such"

"Mr Rearden, this is hardly the way to defend yourself"

"I said that I would not defend myself"

'But this is unheard of! Do you realize the gravity of the charge against you?"

"I do not care to consider it"

"Do you realize the possible consequences of your stand?"

"Fully"

"It is the opinion of this court that the facts presented by the prosecution seem to warrant no leniency The penalty which this court has the power to impose on you is extremely severe"

'Go ahead

'I beg your pardon?"

'Impose it"

The three judges looked at one another. Then their spokesman turned back to Rearden "This is unprecedented," he said

'*It* is completely irregular" said the second judge "The law requires you to submit a plea in your own defense Your only alternative is to state for the record that you throw yourself upon the mercy of the court'

"I do not"

'But you have to"

'Do you mean that what you expect from me is some sort of voluntary *action*?"

"*Yes*"

'I volunteer nothing"

'But the law demands that the defendant's side be represented on the record"

"Do you mean that you need my help to make this procedure legal?"

'Well no   yes   that is, to complete the form"

"I will not help you"

The third and youngest judge, who had acted as prosecutor snapped impatiently "This is ridiculous and unfair! Do you want to let it look as if a man of your prominence had been railroaded without a—' He cut himself off short Somebody at the back of the courtroom emitted a long whistle

"I want" said Rearden gravely, "to let the nature of this procedure appear exactly for what it is If you need my help to disguise it—I will not help you"

But we are giving you a chance to defend yourself—and *it is* you who are rejecting it"

"I will not help you to pretend that I have a chance I will not help you to *preserve* an appearance of righteousness where rights are not recognized I will not help you *to preserve* an appearance of rationality by entering a debate in which a gun is the final argument *I will not help* you to pretend that you are administering justice"

"*But* the law compels you to volunteer a defense!"

There was laughter at the back of the courtroom

"*That* is the flaw in your theory, gentlemen," said Rearden gravely, "and I will not help you out of it. If you choose to deal with men by means of compulsion, do so But you will discover that you need the voluntary co-operation of your victims, in many more ways than you can see at present And your victims should discover that it is their own volition—which you cannot force—that makes you possible I choose to be consistent and I will obey you in the manner you demand. Whatever you wish me to do, I will do it at the point of a gun. If you sentence me to jail, you will have to send armed men to carry me there—I will not volunteer to move If you fine me, you will have to seize my property to collect the fine—I will not volunteer to pay it If you believe that you have the right to force me—use your guns openly I will not help you to disguise the nature of your action"

The eldest judge leaned forward across the table and his voice became suavely derisive "You speak as if you were fighting for some sort of principle, Mr Rearden, but what you're actually fighting for is only your property, isn't it?"

"Yes, of course I am fighting for my property Do you know the kind of principle *that* represents?"

"You pose as a champion of freedom, but it's only the freedom to make money that you're after"

"Yes, of course All I want is the freedom to make money Do you know [illegible]

[illegible]

his own profit."

"I work for [illegible]

[illegible]

"No I do not want my attitude to be misunderstood I shall be glad to state it for the record I am in full agreement with the facts of everything said about me in the newspapers—with the facts but not with the evaluation I work for nothing but my own profit—which I make by selling a product they need to men who are willing and able to buy it I do not produce it for their benefit at the expense of mine, and they do not buy it for my benefit at the expense of theirs, I do not sacrifice my interests to them nor do they sacrifice theirs to me, we deal as equals by mutual consent to mutual advantage—and I am proud of every penny that I have earned in this manner I am rich and I am proud of every penny I own I made my money by my own effort, in free exchange and through the voluntary consent of every man I dealt with—the voluntary consent of those who employed me when I started the voluntary consent of those who work for me now, the voluntary consent of those who buy my product I shall answer all the questions you are afraid to ask me openly Do I wish to pay my workers more than their

services are worth to me? I do not Do I wish to sell my product for less than my customers are willing to pay me? I do not. Do I wish to sell it at a loss or give it away? I do not. If this is evil, do whatever you please about me, according to whatever standards you hold These are mine I am earning my own living, as every honest man must I refuse to accept as guilt the fact of my own existence and the fact that I must work in order to support it. I refuse to accept as guilt the fact that I am able to do it and do it well I refuse to accept as guilt the fact that I am able to do it better than most people—the fact that my work is of greater value than the work of my neighbors and that more men are willing to pay me I refuse to apologize for my ability—I refuse to apologize for my success—I refuse to apologize for my money If this is evil, make the most of it If this is what the public finds harmful to it interests let the public destroy me This is my code—and I will accept no other I could say to you that I have done more good for my fellow men than you can ever hope to accomplish—but I will

will not say that the good of others was the purpose of my work—my own good was my purpose, and I despise the man who surrenders his I could say to you that you do not serve the public good—that no-

devastation—as any looter must, when he runs out of victims. I could say it but I won't It is not your particular policy that I challenge, but your moral premise If it were true that men could achieve their good by means of turning some men into sacrificial animals, and I were asked to immolate myself for the sake of creatures who wanted to survive at the price of my blood, if I were asked to serve the interests of society apart from, above and against my own—I would refuse I would reject it as the most contemptible evil, I would fight it with every power I possess, I would fight the

say The public good be damned, I will have no part of it

his judges He sa
es that pleaded fo
the open, he sa

in newsreel theaters at any appearance of a businessman on th

reen they did not attempt a counter-demonstration, they were lent.

As he looked at the crowd, people saw in his face what the threats f the judges had not been able to evoke the first sign of emotion.

It was a few moments before they heard the furious beating of a avel upon the table and one of the judges yelling

"— or I shall have the courtroom cleared!"

[illegible]

arkin was staring at the floor There was no expression on Bertram cudder's face—or on Lillian s She sat at the end of a row, her legs rossed [illegible]

[illegible] oped to see, had looked for from the start of the session, had anted to be present more than any other face around him But Fran isco d Anconia had not come

"Mr Rearden," said the eldest judge, smiling affably reproach ully and [illegible]

[illegible] nguished achievements Our purpose is only to balance social ressures and do justice to all This hearing is really intended, not as trial but as a friendly discussion aimed at mutual understanding nd co-operation."

"I do not co-operate at the point of a gun"

"Why [illegible] ant such [illegible] es chief [illegible] nent of [illegible] essed his guilt by disappearing in order to escape trial"

"No. We [illegible] agreement"

[illegible] u may not share some [illegible] we re all working for [illegible] We realize that you we e prompted to disregard legal technicalities by the critical situ- ation of the coal mines and the crucial importance of fuel to the public welfare"

"No I was prompted by my own profit and my own interests What effect it had on the coal mines and the public welfare is for you to estimate That was not my motive"

Mr Mowen stared dazedly about him

Larkin "Something s gone screwy here"

"Oh shut up!" snapped Larkin

"I am sure Mr Rearden," said the eldest judge "that you do not really believe—nor does the public—that we wish to treat you as a sacrificial victim If anyone has been laboring under such a misapprehension we are anxious to prove that it is not true."

The judges retired to consider their verdict. They d d not stay out long They returned to an ominously silent courtroom—and announced that a fine of $5 000 was imposed on Henry Rearden, but that the sentence was suspended

Streaks of jeering laughter ran through the applause that swept the courtroom The applause was aimed at Rearden the laughter—at the judges

Rearden stood motionless not turning to the crowd barely hearing the applause He stood looking at the judges There was no triumph in his f

a vision with

the enormity

world He felt as if after a journey of years through a landscape of devastation past the ruins of great factories the wrecks of powerful engines the bodies of invincible men he had come upon the despoiler expecting to find a giant—and had found a rat eager to scurry for cover at the first sound of a human step If this is what has beaten us he thought the guilt is ours

He was jolted back into the courtroom by the people pressing to surround him He smiled in answer to their smiles to the frantic, tragic eagerness of their faces there was a touch of sadness in his smile

God bless you Mr Rearden!" said an old woman with a ragged shawl over her head Can t you save us Mr Rearden? They're eating us alive and it s no use fooling anybody about how it s the rich that they re after—do you know what s happening to us?"

Listen Mr Rearden said a man who looked like a factory worker "it s the rich who're selling us down the river Tell those wealthy bastards who re so anxious to give everything away that when they give away their palaces they re giving away the skin off our backs

I know it " said Rearden

The guilt is ours he thought If we who were the movers the p oviders h b f t the brand

our

rld?

to-

day they had cheered him by the side of the track of the John Galt Line But tomorrow they would clamor for a new directive from Wesley Mouch and a free housing project from Orren Boyle while Boyle s girders collapsed upon their heads They would do it, because they would be told to forget as a sin that which had made them cheer Hank Rearden

Why were they ready to renounce their highest moments as a

Why were they willing to betray the best within them? What

them believe that this earth was a realm of evil where despair

what idea, what simple idea available to the simplest man, had mankind accept the doctrines that led it to self-destruction

* *

Hank, I'll never think that it s hopeless not ever again said ny that evening after the trial I ll never be tempted to quit 've proved that the right always works and always wins—" She ped, then added "—provided one knows what is the right.

llian said to him at d nner next day So you've won have you?"

e thing that makes you sure is a moral premise

he newspapers were silent After the exaggerated attention they given to the case they acted as if the trial were not worthy of ice They printed brief accounts on unlikely pages worded in such eralities that no reader could discover any hint of a controversial e

The businessmen he met seemed to wish to evade the subject of trial Some made no comment at all but turned away their es show ng a peculiar resentment under the effort to appear non nmittal as if they feared that the mere act of looking at him uld be interpreted as taking a stand Others ventured to com nt "In my opin on, Rearden it was extremely unwise of you It seems to me that this is hardly the time to make enemies We can't afford to arouse resentment

"Whose resentment?" he asked

"I don't think the government will like it.

"You saw the consequences of *that*

"Well I don t know The public won't take it, there s bound be a lot of indignation"

"You saw how the public took it"

"Well [illegible] hard not to give any [illegible] greed—and you've [illegible] you have no right your profits and your property?"

"Oh no no certainly not—but why go to extremes? There s ways a middle ground"

"A middle ground between you and your murderers?"

"Now why use such words?"

"What I said at the trial was it true or not?"

"It's going to be misquoted and misunderstood"
"Was it true or not?"
"The public is too dumb to grapple with such issues"
"Was it true or not?"
"Its no time to boast about being rich—when the populace is starving Its just goading them on to seize everything"
'But telling them that you have no right to your wealth, while *they* have—is whats going to restrain them?"
Well, I dont know "
"I dont like the things you said at your trial," said another man.

save your goddamn necks along with mine"

A group of businessmen headed by Mr Mowen did not issue any statements about the trial But a week later they announced, with an inordinate amount of publicity, that they were endowing the

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lut ten
"Some
l from

the fact that of all social groups he seems to be most unpopular with his own fellow businessmen His old fashioned brand of ruthlessness seems to be too much even for those predatory barons of profit"

On an evening in December—when the street beyond his window was like a congested throat coughing with the horns of pre-Christmas traffic—Rearden sat in his room at the Wayne-Falkland Hotel fighting an enemy more dangerous than weariness or fear revulsion against the thought of having to deal with human beings

He sat unwilling to venture into the streets of the city, unwilling to move, as if he were chained to his chair and to this room He had tried for hours to ignore an emotion that felt like the pull of homesickness his awareness that the only man whom he longed to see, was here, in this hotel just a few floors above him

He had caught himself, in the past few weeks, wasting time in the lobby whenever he entered the hotel or left it, loitering unnecessarily at the mail counter or the newsstand watching the hurried currents of people, hoping to see Francisco d Anconia among them He had caught himself eating solitary dinners in the restaurant of the Wayne Falkland, with his eyes on the curtains of the entrance doorway Now he caught himself sitting in his room, thinking that the distance was only a few floors

He rose to his feet, with a chuckle of amused indignation he acting, he thought, like a woman who waits for a telephone call

fights against the temptation to end the torture by making the move There was no reason, he thought, why he could not go Francisco d Anconia, if that was what he wanted Yet when he himself that he would, he felt some dangerous element of surrender in the intensity of his own relief

He made a step toward the phone, to call Francisco s suite but stopped It was not what he wanted, what he wanted was simply to walk in, unannounced as Francisco had walked into his office, it

ly to the man he had seen at the mouth of the furnace—he stood confidently in the elevator, looking up—he walked confidently down hall feeling his bitterness relax into gaiety—he knocked at the door

Francisco's voice snapped, "Come in!" It had a brusque, absent minded sound.

Rearden opened the door and stopped on the threshold One of hotel s costliest satin shaded lamps stood in the middle of the floor, throwing a circle of light on wide sheets of drafting paper

hanging down

each propped

ntration upon

l not look up

ive seen the figure of a purposeful young worker intent upon a difficult task

In a moment, Francisco raised his head In the next instant, he flung his body upward to a kneeling posture looking at Rearden with a smile of incredulous pleasure In the next, he seized the drawings and threw them aside too hastily face down

"What did I interrupt?" asked Rearden

Rearden felt

this

"Let me see it"

"No" He rose and kicked the drawings aside

Francisco's

y of

visit,

he were at home

"Why didn t you come to continue what you had asked.

"You have brilliantly without my

"Do you mean, my trial?"
"I mean, your trial"
"How do you know? You weren't there"
Francisco smiled, because the tone of the voice confessed an added sentence I was looking for you. "Don't you suppose I heard every word of it on the radio?'
"You did? Well, how did you like hearing your own lines come over the air, with me as your stooge?"
"You weren't, Mr Rearden They weren't my lines Weren't they the things you had always lived by?"
"Yes"
"I only helped you to see that you should have been proud to live by them"
'I am glad you heard it"
"It was great, Mr Rearden—and about three generations too late"
"What do you mean?"
"If one single businessman had had the courage, then, to say that he worked for nothing but his own profit—and to say it proudly—he would have saved the world"
"I haven't given up the world as lost"
"It isn't It can never be But oh God!—what he would have spared us!"
"Well, I guess we have to fight, no matter what era we're caught in"
[illegible] what you get
[illegible]
[illegible]
'See for yourself"
"I know that you had a great deal to tell me, when we were interrupted, that night at the mills Why don't you finish what you had to say?"
'No It's too soon"
Francisco acted as if there were nothing unusual about this visit, as if he took it as a matter of natural course—as he had always acted in Rearden's presence But Rearden noted that he was not so calm as he wished to appear, he was pacing the room, in a manner that seemed a release for an emotion he did not want to confess, he had forgotten the lamp and it still stood on the floor as the room's sole illumination
"You've been taking an awful beating in the way of discoveries haven't you?" said Francisco "How did you like the behavior of your fellow businessmen?"
'I suppose it was to be expected"
[illegible], "It's
[illegible]" The
[illegible]nd of
[illegible] was an instant's pause, but Francisco answered calmly,

"S nce I understood what those men were doing He added "I know what you re going through right now and what s still ahead

"Thanks" said Rearden

"For what?"

"For what you re trying so hard not to show But don t worry about me I m still able to stand it You know, I didn t come here because I wanted to talk about myself or even about the trial"

"I'll agree to any subject you choose—in order to have you here" He said it in the tone of a courteous joke but the tone could not disguise it he meant it "What did you want to talk about?"

"You."

Francisco stopped He looked at Rearden for a moment, then answered quietly "All right"

If that which Rearden felt could have gone directly into words past the barrier of his will he would have cried Don t let me down —I need you—I am fighting all of them I have fought to my limit and am condemned to fight beyond it—and, as sole ammunition possible to me I need the knowledge of one single man whom I can trust, respect and admire

Instead, he said calmly, very simply—and the only note of a personal bond between them was that tone of sincerity which comes with a direct, unqualifiedly rational statement and implies the same honesty of mind in the listener—"You know I think that the only real moral crime that one man can commit against another is the attempt to create, by his words or actions, an impression of the contradictory the impossible the irrational and thus shake the concept of rationality in his victim"

"That s true"

"If I say that that is the dilemma you ve put me in would you help me by answering a personal question?"

"I will try"

"I don t have to tell you—I think you know it—that you are the man of the highest mind I have ever met I am coming to accept not as right, but at least as possible the fact that you refuse to exercise your great ability in the world of today But what a man does out of despair is not necessarily a key to his character I have always thought that the real key is in that which he seeks for his enjoyment. And this is what I find inconceivable no matter what you ve given up, so long as you chose to remain alive how can you find any pleasure in spending a life as valuable as yours on running after cheap women and on an imbecile s idea of diversions?"

Francisco looked at him with a fine smile of amusement as if saying No? You didn t want to talk about yourself? And what is it that you re confessing but the desperate loneliness which makes the question of my character more important to you than any other question right now?

The smile merged into a soft, good-natured chuckle as if the question involved no problem for him no painful secret to reveal "There s a way to solve every dilemma of that kind Mr Rearden Check your premises" He sat down on the floor settling gaily informally, for a conversation he would enjoy "Is it

first hand conclusion that I am a man of high mind?"

"Yes"

"Do you know of your own first hand knowledge that I spend my life running after women?"

"You've never denied it."

"Denied it? I've gone to a lot of trouble to create that impression"

"Do you mean to say that it isn't true?"

"Do I strike you as a man with a miserable inferiority complex?"

"Good God, no!'

"Only that kind of man spends his life running after women."

"What do you mean?"

... about the me

adventures—which can't be done, because sex is not the cause, ...

... own value"

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body creates a desire and makes a choice for you—just about ...

... railroad rails ...
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esteem The man who is proudly certain of his own value, will want the highest type of woman he can find, the woman he admires, the strongest, the hardest to conquer—because only the possession of a heroine will give him the sense of an achievement, not the possession of a brainless slut. He does not seek to . . . What's the matter?" he asked, seeing the look on Rearden's face, a look of intens... much beyond mere interest in an abstract discussion.

"Go on," said Rearden tensely.

"He does not seek to gain his value, he seeks to express it. The...

is no conflict between the standards of his mind and the desires of his body But the man who is convinced of his own worthlessness will be drawn to a woman he despises—because she will reflect his own secret self she will release him from that objective reality in which he is a fraud she will give him a momentary illusion of his own value and a momentary escape from the moral code that damns him. Observe the ugly mess which most men make of their sex lives—and observe the mess of contradictions which they hold as their moral philosophy One proceeds from the other Love is our response to our highest values—and can be nothing else Let a man corrupt his values and his view of existence let him profess that love is not self-enjoyment but self-denial, that virtue consists, not of pride, but of pity or pain or weakness or sacrifice, that the noblest love is born, not of admiration but of charity, not in response to *values* but in response to *flaws*—and he will have cut himself in two His body will not obey him it will not respond, it will make him impotent toward the woman he professes to love and draw him to the lowest type of whore he can find His body will always follow the ultimate logic of his deepest convictions if he believes that flaws are values, he has damned existence as evil and [illegible]

[illegible] of its own which his mind cannot conquer that sex is sin, that true love is a pure emotion of the spirit. And then he will wonder why love brings him nothing but boredom and sex—nothing but shame "

[illegible] that he was think [illegible]

[illegible] smiled [illegible] you'd [illegible] e able [illegible] evil you'd still [illegible] moral premise [illegible] You'd always [illegible] You'd be the [illegible] to believe that existence is [illegible] re a helpless creature caught in an impossible universe You're the man who's spent his life shaping matter to the purpose of his mind You're the man who would know that just as an idea unexpressed in [illegible] is hypocrisy so is platonic love—and [illegible]

[illegible] spised. Only the man who extols the purity of a love [illegible] desire, is capable of the depravity of a desire devoid of [illegible] observe that most people are creatures cut in half who keep [illegible] ing desperately to one [illegible] to the other One kind of [illegible]

because he can feel nothing for the woman he respects, but [illegible] himself in bondage to an irresistible passion for a slut from the [illegible] people call an idealist The other kind [illegible]

[illegible] esteem, since he scoffs at such a concept as moral values, yet he feels the profound self-contempt which comes from believing that he is a piece of meat He will not acknowledge, but he knows that sex is the physical expression of a tribute to personal values So he tries, by going through the motions of the effect, to acquire that which should have been the cause. He tries to gain a sense of his own value from the women who surrender to him—and he forgets that the women he picks have neither character nor judgment nor standard of value He tells himself that all he's after is physical pleasure—but observe that he tires of his women in a week or a [illegible] *that* is your woman-chaser Does the description fit me?"

"God, no!"

"Then you can judge, without asking my word for it, how much chasing of women I've done in my life"

"But what on earth have you been doing on the front pages of newspapers for the last—isn't it twelve—years?"

"I've spent a lot of money on the most ostentatiously vulgar parties I could think of, and a miserable amount of time on being seen with the appropriate sort of women As for the rest—" He stopped, then said, "I have some friends who know this, but you are the first person to whom I am confiding it against my own rules I have never slept with any of those women. I have never touched one of them."

[illegible] were eager to rush into print with stories insinuating that being seen with me at a restaurant was the sign of a great romance What do you suppose those women are after but the same thing as the chaser—the desire to gain their own value from the number and [illegible] of the men they conquer? Only it's one step phonier, because

the val e they seel

desire They wanted food for their vanity—and I gave it to them I gave them the chance to boast to their friends and to see themselves in the scandal sheets in the roles of great seductresses But do you know that it works in exactly the same way as what you did at your trial? If you want to defeat any kind of vicious fraud—comply with it literally, adding nothing of your own to disguise its nature Those women understood They saw whether there's any satisfaction in being envied by others for a feat one has not achieved Instead of self-esteem, their publicized romances with me have given them a deeper sense of inferiority each one of them knows that she's tried and failed If dragging me into bed is supposed to be her public standard of value, she knows that she couldn t live up to it. I think those women hate me more than any other man on earth But my secret is safe—because each one of them thinks that she was the only one who failed, while all the others succeeded, so she'll be

others consider that which I really am as evil Let them have what they prefer—what I appear to be on the front pages "

"But what for? Why did you do it? Just to teach them a lesson?"

"Hell, no! I wanted to be known as a playboy "

"Why?"

"A playboy is a man who just can t help letting money run through his fingers "

"Why did you want to assume such an ugly sort of role?"

"Camouflage "

"For what?"

"For a purpose of my own "

"What purpose?"

Francisco shook his head "Don't ask me to tell you that I've told you more than I should. You'll come to know the rest of it soon, anyway "

"If it's more than you should, why did you tell me?"

"Because . . . you've made me become impatient for the first time in years " The note of a suppressed emotion came back into his voice. "Because I've ... the truth about me ..

pla

I'v

wil

"I've never confessed that to anyone . . not even to he"

"Have you lost her?"

Francisco sat looking off into space; in a moment, he answered tonelessly, "I hope not."

The light of the lamp hit his face from below, and Rearden could not see his eyes, only his mouth drawn in lines of endurance and oddly solemn resignation. Rearden knew that this was a wound not to be probed any further.

With one of his swift changes of mood, Francisco said, "Oh well, it's just a little longer!" and rose to his feet, smiling.

"Since you trust me," said Rearden, "I want to tell you a secret of mine in exchange. I want you to know how much I trusted you before I came here. And I might need your help later."

"You're the only man left whom I'd like to help."

"There's a great deal that I don't understand about you, but I'm certain of one thing: that you're not a friend of the looters."

"I'm not." There was a hint of amusement in Francisco's face, as at an understatement.

... I'm going ... w, ... ne

they tried me for."

Sitting on the arm of a chair, a few feet away, Francisco leaned forward to look at him silently, frowning, for a long moment. "Do you think that you're fighting them by doing it?" he asked.

... for them ... enriching ... ir abuse ... to do it at the price of ac... and the risk of being thrown in j... y ... istence a system ... by the breaking ...

"It's not for their system, but for customers whom I can't abandon to the mercy of their system—I intend to outlast that system of theirs—I don't intend to let them stop me, no matter how hard they make it for me—and I don't intend to give up the world to them, even if I am the last man left. Right now, that illegal order is more important to me than th...

... en he ... e you ... ime?" ... with a

man I can trust."

"Really? Who is it?"

"You."

... so low that ... cus ... er a

phony name—but I'll need your help to prevent anyone on your

. . . I need that copper. I need

survive and to beat them. I've never asked for anyone's help I m

It was a scream of plain shock Francisco had shot to his feet, st any attempt to hide anything "On December fifth?"

"Yes," said Rearden, stupefied

Francisco leaped to the telephone "I *told* you not to deal with Ancoma Copper!" It was the half moaning, half-furious cry of spair.

His hand was reaching for the telephone, but jerked back. He asped the edge of the table, as if to stop himself from lifting e receiver, and he stood, head down, for how long a time neither nor Rearden could tell. Rearden was held numb by the fact of atching an agonized struggle with the motionless figure of a man its only evidence. He could not guess the nature of the struggle, knew only that there was something which Francisco had the ower to prevent in that moment and that it was a power which

ace drawn by so ble cry of pain, mness, as if the it.

Francisco . . . what's the matter?"

"Hank, I . . ." He shook his head, stopped, then stood up traight, "Mr Rearden," he said, in a voice that had the strength, he despair and the peculiar dignity of a plea he knew to be hopess, "for the time when you're going to damn me, when you're oing to doubt every word I said . I swear to you—by the woman I love—that I am your friend."

The memory of Francisco's face as it looked in that moment, came back to Rearden . . .

. . . ships.

Chapter V ACCOUNT OVERDRAWN

It was the first failure in the history of Rearden Steel For the first time, an order was not delivered as promised But by February 15, when the Taggart rail was due, it made no difference to anyone any longer

Winter had come early, in the last days of November People said that it was the hardest winter on record and that no one could be blamed for the unusual severity of the snowstorms They did not care to remember that there had been a time when snowstorms did not sweep unresisted, down unlighted roads and upon the roofs of unheated houses, did not stop the movement of trains, did not leave a wake of corpses counted by the hundreds.

The first time that Danagger Coal was late in delivering fuel to Taggart Transcontinental in the last week of December, Danagger's ... he had had to cut

said, because they were exhausted by the harsh discipline of the former management, he could not help it if some of the superintendents and foremen had quit him without reason, men who had been with the company for ten to twenty years, he could not help it if there seemed to be some friction between his workers and his ... much more

... days delay

It was only one day's delay It caused a three days' delay in the run of Freight Train Number 386, bound from California to New York with fifty nine carloads of lettuce and oranges Freight Train Number 386 waited on sidings, at coaling stations, for the fuel that had not arrived When the train reached New York, the lettuce and oranges had to be dumped into the East River they had waited their turn too long in the freight houses of California with the train schedules cut and the engines forbidden, by directive, to pull a train of more than sixty cars Nobody but their friends and trade associates noticed that three orange growers in California went out of business, as well as two lettuce farmers in Imperial Valley, nobody noticed the closing of a commission house in New York, of a plumbing company to which the commission house owned money, of a lead pipe wholesaler who had supplied the plumbing company When people were starving, said the newspapers one did not have to feel concern over the failures of business enterprises which were *only* private ventures for private profit

The coal shipped across the Atlantic by the Bureau of Global

ief did not reach the People's State of England it was seized by
nar Danneskjold

he second time that Danagger Coal was late in delivering fuel Taggart Transcontinental, in mid-January, Danagger's cousin rled over the telephone that he could not help it his mines had n shut down for three days, due to a shortage of lubricating oil the machinery The supply of coal to Taggart Transcontinental four days late

Ir Quinn, of the Quinn Ball Bearing Company which had once ved from Connecticut to Colorado, waited a week for the freight n that carried his order of Rearden steel When the train ar- d, the doors of the Quinn Ball Bearing Company's plant were ed

[illegible]

celled and the purchasers of his homes sent wandering off down wswept roads in search of that which did not exist anywhere longer

The snowstorm that came at the end of January blocked the passes ough the Rocky Mountains, raising white walls thirty feet high [illegible]

s, they remained beyond the reach of help Trains could not roach them through the storm The last of the trucks made by wrence Hammond broke down on the frozen grades of the untain highways The best of the airplanes once made by Dwight nders were sent out, but never reached Winston Station, they [illegible]

[illegible] lulls of the storm, when the white mesh vanished and [illegible] und it the stillness of a black void merging a lightless earth with tarless sky—the passengers could see, many miles away to the th, a small tongue of flame twisting in the wind It was Wyatt's rch.

By the morning of the sixth day, when the trains were able to ve and proceeded down the slopes of Utah, of Nevada, of Cali nia, the trainmen observed the smokeless stacks and the closed

doors of small trackside factories, which had not been closed on their last run

"Storms are an act of God," wrote Bertram Scudder, "and nobody can be held socially responsible for the weather"

The rations of coal established by Wesley Mouch, permitted the heating of homes for three hours a day There was no wood to burn, no metal to make new stoves, no tools to pierce the walls of the houses for new installations In makeshift contraptions of bricks and oil cans professors were burning the books of their libraries, and fruit growers were burning the trees of their orchards. "Privations strengthen a people s spirit," wrote Bertram Scudder, "and forge the fine steel of social discipline Sacrifice is the cement which unites human bricks into the great edifice of society"

"The nation which had once held the creed that greatness is achieved by production is now told that it is achieved by squalor" said Francisco d Anconia in a press interview But this was not printed

The only business boom that winter, came to the amusement industry People wrenched their pennies out of the quicksands of their food and heat budgets, and went without meals in order to crowd into movie theaters, in order to escape for a few hours the state of animals reduced to the single concern of terror over their crudest needs In January all movie theaters, night clubs and bowling alleys were closed by order of Wesley Mouch, for the purpose of conserving fuel Pleasure is not an essential of existence," wrote Bertram Scudder

'You must learn to take a philosophical attitude," said Dr Simon Pritchett to a young girl student who broke down into sudden, hysterical sobs in the middle of a lecture She had just returned from [illegible] ke Superior [illegible] on who had [illegible] ett. "Reality [illegible] her son is dead? How does she know that he ever existed?"

People with pleading eyes and desperate faces crowded into tents where evangelists cried in triumphant gloating that man was unable to cope with nature that his science was a fraud, that his mind was a failure, that he was reaping punishment for the sin of pride, for his confidence in his own intellect—and that only faith in the power of mystic secrets could protect him from the fissure of a rail or from the blowout of the last tire on his last truck Love was the key to the mystic secrets, they cried, love and selfless sacrifice to the needs of others

Orren Boyle made a selfless sacrifice to the needs of others He sold to the Bureau of Global Relief, for shipment to the People's State of Germany ten thousands tons of structural steel shapes that had been intended for the Atlantic Southern Railroad "It was a difficult decision to make," he said, with a moist, unfocused look of righteousness, to the panic-stricken president of the Atlantic Southern "but I weighed the fact that you're a rich corporation while the people of Germany are in a state of unspeakable misery So I

ted on the principle that need comes first. When in doubt, it s
e weak that must be considered, not the strong" The president of
e Atlantic Southern had heard that Orren Boyle's most valuable
end in Washington had a friend in the Ministry of Supply of the
ople's State of Germany But whether this had been Boyle s
otive or whether it had been the principle of sacrifice, no one
uld tell and it made no difference if Boyle had been a saint of the
ed of selflessness, he would have had to do precisely what he
d done This silenced the president of the Atlantic Southern,
dared not admit that he cared for his railroad more than for the
ople of Germany, he dared not argue against the principle of
crifice

The waters of the Mississippi had been rising all through the
onth of January, swollen by the storms, driven by the wind into
restless grinding of current and against every obstruction in
eir way On a night of lashing sleet, in the first week of February, the Mississippi bridge of the Atlantic Southern collapsed under
passenger train. The engine and the first five sleepers went down
th the cracking girders into the twisting black spirals of water
ghty feet below The rest of the train remained on the first three
ans of the bridge, which held.

"You can't have your cake and let your neighbor eat it, too,"
id Francisco d'Anconia The fury of denunciations which the
lders of public voices unleashed against him was greater than
eir concern over the horror at the river

It was whispered that the

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tter had not been printed It was whispered that the first three
ans of the bridge had held because they had been reinforced
th structural shapes of Rearden Metal but five hundred tons of
e Metal was all that the railroad had been able to obtain under
e Fair Share Law

As the sole result of official investigations two bridges across
e Mississippi, belonging to smaller railroads, were condemned
ne of the railroads

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ssissippi were to be forbidden as a material obstruction, the
ourts had ordered Nathaniel Taggart to tear down his bridge
nd to carry his passengers across the river by means of barges
e had won that battle by a majority of one voice on the Supreme
ourt. His bridge was now the only major link left to hold the
ontinent together His last descendant had made

rule that whatever else was neglected the Taggart Bridge would always be maintained in flawless shape

The steel shipped across the Atlantic by the Bureau of Global Relief had not re [illegible] had been seized by Ragnar [illegible] Bureau because t[illegible] the activities of [illegible]

It was not until the public began to notice the growing [illegible] then the disappearance from the market of electric irons toasters washing machines and all electrical appliances that people began to ask questions and to hear whispers They heard that no ship loaded with d Anconia copper was able to reach a port of the United States it could not get past Ragnar Danneskjold

In the foggy winter nights on the waterfront sailors whispered the story that Ragnar Danneskjold always seized the cargoes of relief vessels but never touched the copper he sank the d'Anconia ships with their loads he let the crews escape in lifeboats, but the copper went to the bottom of the ocean They whispered it as a dark legend beyond men s power to explain nobody could find a reason why Danneskjold did not choose to take the copper

In the second week of February, for the purpose of conserving copper wire and electric power, a directive forbade the running of elevators above the twenty fifth floor The upper floors of the buildings had to be vacated and partitions of unpainted boards went up to cut off the stairways By special permit exceptions were granted—on the grounds of "essential need —to a few of the larger business enterprises and the more fashionable hotels The tops of the cities were cut down.

The inhabitants of New York had never had to be aware of the weather Storms had been only a nuisance that slowed the traffic and made puddles in the doorways of brightly lighted shops. S[illegible]p ng against the wind dressed in raincoats furs and evening slippers people had felt that a storm was an intruder within the city Now facing the gusts of snow that came sweeping down the narrow streets people felt in dim terror that they were the temporary intruders and that the wind had the right-of way

"It won t make any difference to us now forget it Hank, it doesn t matter " said Dagny when Rearden told her that he would [illegible] a sup[illegible] [illegible]e could

[illegible] a plate cracked on a [illegible]il joint and sent an engine off the track half a mile from Winston Colorado on a division which was to have been relaid with the new rail The station agent of Winston sighed and sent for a crew w th a crane it was only one of the minor accidents that were happen ng in his section every other day or so he was gett ng used to it

Rearden that evening his coat collar raised his hat slanted low over his eyes the snow drifts rising to his knees was tramping through an abandoned open pit coal mine in a forsaken corner

Pennsylvania, supervising the loading of pirated coal upon the ucks which he had provided. Nobody owned the mine, nobody ould afford the cost of working it. But a young man with a brusque ace and dark, angry eyes, who came from a starving settlement, ad organized a gang of the unemployed and made a deal with earden to deliver the coal They mined it at night, they stored m hidden culverts, they were paid in cash, with no questions asked answered. Guilty of a fierce desire to remain alive, they and earden traded like savages, without rights, titles, contracts or protection, with nothing but mutual understanding and a ruthlessly absolute observance of one's given word Rearden did not even know e name of the young leader Watching him at the job of loading the ucks, Rearden thought that this boy, if born a generation earlier, ould have become a great industrialist, now, he would probably ad his brief life as a plain criminal in a few more years

Dagny, that evening, was facing a meeting of the Taggart Board f Directors

They sat about a polished table in a stately Board room which as inadequately heated The men who through the decades of their areers, had relied for their security upon keeping their faces blank, eir words inconclusive and their clothes impeccable, were thrown ff key by the

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rby, he had graying temples, a long, narrow face and a mouth hat looked as if he had to stretch his facial muscles in order to eep it closed, this gave a suggestion of primness to a face that displayed nothing else. The Directors did not know whether he was present as the guest, the adviser or the ruler of the Board, they preferred

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In the same cautious tone of waiting for someone else to pick up the intended purpose of his words, another man said, "If we consider our critical shortage of equipment, and if we consider that we are letting it wear out in the service of a branch line running at a loss—" He stopped and did not state what would occur if they considered it.

"In my opinion," said a thin, pallid man with a neat mustache, "the Rio Norte Line seems to have become a financial burden which the company might not be able to carry—that is, not unless certain readjustments are made, which—" He did not finish, but

glanced at Mr Weatherby Mr Weatherby looked as if he had n[illegible] noticed it

"Jim said the chairman "I think you might explain the p cture Mr Weatherby

Taggart s voice still retained a practiced smoothness but it was the smoothness of a piece of cloth stretched tight over a broken glass object and the sharp edges showed through once in a while I think it is generally conceded that the main factor affecting every railroad in the country is the unusual rate of business failures While we all realize of course that this is only temporary still for the [illegible] e are that

[illegible]

us our steadiest revenues are now showing an actual operating loss A train schedule geared to a heavy volume of freight cannot be ma nta ned fo [illegible] been seven. We [illegible] ir present [illegible] did not [illegible] edges be- [illegible] shippers

is unfair Most of them have been complaining about their competitors and have passed various local measures to eliminate competition in their particular fields Now most of them are practically in sole possession of their markets yet they refuse to realize that [illegible] rates wh ch [illegible]

[illegible]

imitation of astonishment "That is not the stand they have taken."

"If certain rumors which I refuse to credit are true—" sa d the chairman and stopped one syllable after the tone of panic had become obvious in his voice

Jim said Mr Weatherby pleasantly "I think it would be best if we just didn t mention the subject of raising the rates "

"I wasn t suggesting an actual raise at this time" said Taggart hastily "I merely referred to it to round out the picture"

"But Jim said an old man with a quavering voice "I thought that your influence—I mean your friendship—with Mr Mouch would insure "

He stopped because the others were looking at him severely in [illegible] d not mention [illegible] rious ways of [illegible] him. [illegible] ouch sent me [illegible] or a raise in wages and the demand of the shippers for a cut in rates "

He said it in a tone of casual firmness he knew that all these had known it, that the demands had been discussed in the

ewspapers for months he knew that the dread in these men s minds as not of the fact, but of his naming it—as if the fact had not isted, but his words held the power to make it exist, he knew at they had waited to see whether he would exercise that power, was letting them know that he would

Their situation warranted an outcry of protest, there was none, obody answered him Then James Taggart said in that biting, ervous tone which is intended to convey anger, but merely confesses uncertainty I wouldn t exaggerate the importance of Buzzy Watts of the National Shippers Council He s been making a lot of oise and giving a lot of expensive dinners in Washington, but I ouldn t advise taking it too seriously '

"Oh I don t know," said Mr Weatherby

"Listen, Clem, I do know that Wesley refused to see him last eek"

"That s true Wesley is a pretty busy man"

"And I know that when Gene Lawson gave that big party ten ays ago, practically everybody was there, but Buzzy Watts was ot invited."

"That s so," said Mr Weatherby peaceably

"So I wouldn't bet on Mr Buzzy Watts, Clem And I wouldn't et it worry me"

"Wesley s an impartial man," said Mr Weatherby "A man devoted o public d ts. It's the

ued businessman, a valuable adviser and one of his closest personal friends" Taggart s eyes shot to him swiftly this was still worse "But nobody can say that Wesley would hesitate to sacrifice his personal feelings and friendships—where the welfare of the public is concerned."

Taggart s face

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the of Buzzy Watts.

But what he asked and he asked it hastily, was "You re not implying that I would place my personal interests above the public welfare, are you?"

"No, of course not," said Mr Weatherby, with a look that was almost a smile "Certainly not. Not you, Jim Your public spirited attitude—and understanding—are too well known That s why Wesley expects you to see every side of the picture"

"Yes of course," said Taggart, trapped

"Well consider the unions side of it. Maybe you can't afford to give them a raise, but how can they afford to exist when the cost of living has shot sky high? They've got to eat, don t they? That comes first, railroad or no railroad" Mr Weatherby s tone had a

kind of placid righteousness, as if he were reciting a formula required to convey another meaning, clear to all of them, he was looking straight at Taggart, in special emphasis of the unstated. "There are almost a million members in the railway unions With families dependents and poor relatives—and who hasn't got poor relatives these days?—it amounts to about five million votes Persons I mean Wesley has to bear that in mind He has to think of their psychology And then consider the public The rates you're charging were established at a time when everybody was making money But the way things are now, the cost of transportation has become a burden nobody can afford. People are screaming about it all over the country " He looked straight at Taggart, he merely looked, but his glance had the quality of a wink "There's an awful lot of them, Jim They're not very happy at the moment about an awful lot of things A government that would bring the railroad rates down would make a lot of folks grateful"

The silence that answered him was like a hole so deep that no sound could be heard of the things crashing down to its bottom. Taggart knew, as they all knew, to what disinterested motive Mr Mouch would always be ready to sacrifice his personal friendships

It was the silence and the fact that she did not want to say it, had come here resolved not to speak, but could not resist it, that made [illegible] 's, gentlemen?" [illegible] was an involuntary answer to an unexpected sound, but the swiftness with which they moved away—to look down at the table, at the walls, anywhere but at her—was the conscious answer to the meaning of the sounds.

In the silence of the next moment, she felt their resentment like a starch thickening the air of the room, and she knew that it was not resentment against Mr. Weatherby, but against her She could have borne it, if they had merely let her question go unanswered, but what made her feel a sickening tightness in her stomach, was their double fraud of pretending to ignore her and then answering in their own kind of manner.

The chairman said, not looking at her, his voice pointedly noncommital, yet vaguely purposeful at the same time, "It would have been all right, everything would have worked out fine, if it weren't for the wrong people in positions of power, such as Buzzy Watts and Chick Morrison"

"Oh, I wouldn't worry about Chick Morrison" said the pallid [illegible] fot [illegible] re [illegible] e very close to [illegible] However, Kip [illegible]

Mr. Weatherby was the only person in the room who did not [illegible] looking at Dagny; but whenever his glance rested upon her, it

gistered nothing; she was the only person in the room whom he
l not see

"I am thinking," said Mr Weatherby casually, looking at Taggart, "that you might do Wesley a favor"

"Wesley knows that he can always count on me."

"Well, my thought is that if you granted the unions' wage raises we might drop the question of cutting the rates, for the time ing"

"I can't do that!" It was almost a cry "The National Alliance of ailroads has taken a unanimous stand against the raises and has mmitted every member to refuse"

"That's just what I mean" said Mr Weatherby softly "Wesley eds to drive a wedge into that Alliance stand If a railroad like ... e easy

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... it, by

... Weatherby smiled What court? Let Wesley take care of hat."

"But listen, Clem, you know—you know just as well as I do—hat we can't afford it!"

Mr Weatherby shrugged. "That's a problem for you to work ut"

"How, for Christ's sake?"

"I don't know That's your job, not ours You wouldn't want the overnment to start telling you how to run your railroad, would ou?"

"No, of course not! But—"

"Our job is only to see that the people get fair wages and decent transportation. It's up to you to deliver But, of course, if you say that you can't do the job, why then—"

"I haven't said it!" Taggart cried hastily "I haven't said it at all!"

"Good," said Mr Weatherby pleasantly "We know that you have the ability to find some way to do it."

He was looking at Taggart, Taggart was looking at Dagny

"Well, it was just a thought," said Mr Weatherby, leaning back in his chair in a manner of modest withdrawal "Just a thought for you to mull over I'm only a guest here I don't want to interfere The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the situation of the . . branch lines I believe?"

"Yes," said the chairman and sighed "Yes Now if anyone has a constructive suggestion to offer—" He waited no one answered "I believe the picture is clear to all of us" He waited "It seems to be established that we cannot continue to afford the operation of some of our branch lines the Rio Norte Line in particular . . . and, therefore, some form of action seems to be indicated. "

"I think" ... unex
pec ... ggart."
He ... ny did

not answer, but merely turned to him, he asked, "What do you have to say, Miss Taggart?"

"Nothing"

"I beg your pardon?'

"All I had to say was contained in the report which Jim has read to you" She spoke quietly, her voice clear and flat.

"But you did not make any recommendations"

'I have none to make"

"But, after all, as our Operating Vice President, you have a vital interest in the policies of this railroad"

'I have no authority over the policies of this railroad"

"Oh, but we are anxious to consider your opinion."

"I have no opinions"

"Miss Taggart,' he said, in the smoothly formal tone of an order, "you cannot fail to realize that our branch lines are running at a disastrous deficit—and that we expect you to make them pay"

'How?"

"I don't know That is your job, not ours."

'I have stated in my report the reasons why that is now impossible If there are facts which I have overlooked, please name them"

"Oh I wouldn t know We expect you to find some way to make it possible Our job is only to see that the stockholders get a fair profit Its up to you to deliver You wouldn't want us to think that you're unable to do the job and—"

'I am unable to do it"

The man opened his mouth, but found nothing else to say, he looked at her in bewilderment, wondering why the formula had failed

"Miss Taggart," asked the man with the green muffler, "did you imply in your report that the situation of the Rio Norte Line was critical?"

"I stated that it was hopeless"

"Then what action do you propose?"

"I propose nothing"

"Aren't you evading a responsibility?"

"What is it that you think you're doing?" She spoke evenly, addressing them all "Are you counting on my not saying that the responsibility is yours, that it was your goddamn policies that brought us where we are? Well [illegible] . of

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which would have been sympathy had he still felt a remnant of hope He said, raising his voice just enough to betray a note of [illegible]lled indignation, "Mr. Chairman, if it is practical solutions

we are considering I should like to suggest that we discuss the tation placed upon the length and speed of our trains Of any le practice, *that* is the most disastrous one Its repeal would [illegible]

eaming about any repeals We wouldn t consider it. We wouldn t en consider listening to any talk on the subject"

"Mr Chairman," the gray haired man asked quietly "shall I ntinue?"

The chairman spread out his hands with a smooth smile in cating helplessness "It would be impractical" he answered

"I think we'd better confine the discussion to the status of the io Norte Line," snapped James Taggart

There was a long silence

The man with the green muffler turned to Dagny "Miss Tag art," he asked sadly and cautiously "would you say that if—this s just a hypothetical question—if the equipment now in use on the io Norte Line were made available it would fill the needs of our ranscontinental main line traffic?"

"It would help"

"The rail of the Rio Norte Line" said the pallid man with the mustache "is unmatched anywhere in the country and could not now be purchased at any price We have three hundred miles of track, which means well over four hundred miles of rail of pure Rearden Metal in that Line Would you say Miss Taggart, that we cannot afford to waste that superlative rail on a branch that carries no major traffic any longer?"

"That is for you to judge"

"Let me put it this way would it be of value if that rail were made available for our main line track, which is in such urgent need of repair?"

"It would help"

"Miss Taggart" asked the man with the quavering voice, "would you say that there are any shippers of consequence left on the Rio Norte Line?"

"There s Ted Nielsen of Nielsen Motors No one else"

"Would you say that the operating costs of the Rio Norte Line could be used to relieve the financial strain on the rest of the system?"

"It would help"

"Then, as our Operating Vice President . . " He stopped, she waited looking at him, he said, "Well?"

"What was your question?"

I meant to say that is well as our Operating Vice President don't you have certain conclusions to draw?"

She stood up She looked at the faces around the table "Gentle-

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drawn-out murder I cannot conceive what it is you think you can accomplish by a pretense of this kind and I will not help you to stage it The final blow will be delivered by you as were all the others

She turned to go The chairman half rose asking helplessly "But, Miss Taggart—

Please remain seated Please continue the d scuss on—and take the vote in which I shall have no voice I shall abstain from voting. I'll stand by if you wish me to but only as an employee I will not pretend to be anything else

She turned away once more but it was the voice of the gray haired man that stopped her "Miss Taggart this is not an official quest on it is only my personal curiosity but would you tell me your view of the future of the Taggart Transcontinental system?"

voice gentler
I system I impossible to run

to stand aside

and let them continue without her

She looked at the city Jim had obtained the perm t which allowed them the use of electric power to the top of the Taggart Bu ld ng From the height of the room the city looked like a flattened remnant with but a few rare lonely streaks of lighted glass st ll ris ng through the darkness to the sky

She d d not l sten to the voices of the men beh nd her She d d not know for how long the broken snatches of their struggle kept roll ng past her—the sounds that nudged and prodded one another trying to edge back and leave someone pushed forward—a struggle not to assert one s own will but to squeeze an assertion from some unwilling vict m—a battle in which the decision was to be pronounced not by the winner but by the loser

"It seems to me It is I think It must in my opinion I If we were to suppose I am merely suggesting am not implying but If we consider both sides It is in my opinion indub table It seems to me to be an unmistakable fact "

She d d not know whose voice it was but she heard it when the voice pronounced

" and therefore I move that the John Galt Line be closed."

Something she thought had made him call the Line by its right name

You had to bear it, too generations ago—it was just as hard for

ı, just as bad, but you did not let it stop you—was it really as l as this? as ugly?—never mind its different forms, but it s only n, and you were not stopped by pain, not by whatever kind it s that you had to bear—you were not stopped—you did not give to it—you faced it and this is the kind I have to face—you fought d I will have to—you did it—I will try She heard in her n mind the quiet intensity of the words of dedication—and it was ne time before she realized that she was speaking to Nat Tag- rt.

The next voice she heard was Mr Weatherby's "Wait a minute, ys Do you happen to remember that you need to obtain permis n before

"Surely there's

you re a public rvice and you're expected to provide transportation, whether you ake money or not."

"But you know that it s impossible!"

"Well, that s fine for you, that solves your problem, if you close at Line—but what will it do to us? Leaving a whole state like olorado practically without transportation—what sort of public ntiment will it arouse? Now, of course if you gave Wesley some ing in return to balance it, if you granted the unions wage uses—"

"I can't! I gave my word to the National Alliance!"

"Your word? Well, suit yourself We wouldn t want to force the lliance We much prefer to have things happen voluntarily But hese are difficult times and it s hard telling what s liable to happen Vith everybody going broke and the tax receipts falling we might— act being that we hold well over fifty per cent of the Taggart onds—we might be compelled to call for the payment of railroad onds within six months"

"*What?!*" screamed Taggart.

"—or sooner"

"But you can't! Oh God, you can't! It was understood that the moratorium was for five years! It was a contract an obligation! We were counting on it!"

"An obligation? Aren t you old fashioned Jim? There aren t any obligations, except the necessity of the moment The original owners of those bonds were counting on their payments too

Dagny

could not v Stockton, ughter

" he asked

"I knew that we would have to pay for those bonds one way or another We re paying"

"Miss Taggart," said the chairman severely "don t you think that I told you-so s are futile? To talk of what would have happened

practical Now we offer you a trade You do something for us and we ll do something for you You give the unions their wage raises and we ll g ve you permission to close the Rio Norte Line"

"All right, said James Taggart his voice choked

Standing at the window she heard them vote on their decis on. She heard them declare that the John Galt Line would end in su weeks on March 31

Its only a matter of getting through the next few moments sh thought take care of the next few moments and then the next, t few at a time and after a while it will be easier you ll get over it after a while

The assignment she gave herself for the next few moments wa to put on her coat and be first to leave the room

Then there was the assignment of riding in an elevator down th great silent length of the Taggart Building Then there was th assignment of crossing the dark lobby

Halfway through the lobby she stopped A man stood leanin against the wall in a manner of purposeful waiting—and it w she who was his purpose because he was looking straight at he She did not recognize him at once because she felt certain that the face she saw could not possibly be there in that lobby at this hour

Hi Slug he said softly

She answered groping for some great distance that had once been hers Hi Frisco

"Have they finally murdered John Galt?"

She struggled to place the moment into some orderly sequence of time The quest on belonged to the present but the solemn face came from those days on the hill by the Hudson when he would have nde ond l h

at

ther

"Why did you come here?"

"To see how you d take it"

"Want to laugh about it?"

"No Dagny I dont want to laugh about it."

She saw no hint of amusement in his face she answered trust ingly "I dont know how Im taking it."

"I do"

"I was expecting it I knew they d have to do it, so now it's only a matter of getting through"—*tonight* she wanted to say but said—"all the work and details"

He took her arm "Lets go some place where we can have a drink together"

"Francisco why dont you laugh at me? You've always laughed out that Line."

[will—tomorrow, when I see you going on with all the work details Not tonight."

Why not?"

Come on You're in no condition to talk about it."

I—" She wanted to protest, but said, "No, I guess I'm not" [illegible]

; felt relief, like a swimmer who stops struggling. The spectacle a man acting with assurance, was a life belt thrown to her at a oment when she had forgotten the hope of its existence The re- f was not in the surrender of responsibility, but in the sight of a an able to assume it.

"Dagny," he said, looking at the city as it moved past their [illegible]

She chuckled, wondering at his accuracy he had guessed the ature of the sickening sense that held her, the sense of a swamp which she had to escape.

"Look around you," he said. "A city is the frozen shape of hu- nan courage—the courage of those men who thought for the first ime of every bolt, rivet and power generator that went to make it. The courage to say, not 'It seems to me,' but *It is*'—and to stake one's life on one's judgment. You're not alone Those men exist. They have always existed. There was a time when human beings crouched in caves, at the mercy of any pestilence and any storm Could men such as those on your Board of Directors have brought them out of the cave and up to this? He pointed at the city

"God, no!"

"Then *there's* your proof that another kind of men do exist."

"Yes," she said avidly "Yes"

"Think of them and forget your Board of Directors"

"Francisco, where are they now—the other kind of men?"

"Now they're not wanted."

"I want them Oh God, how I want them!"

"When you do, you'll find them"

He did not question her about the John Galt Line and she did not speak of [illegible]

was leaning against the table, watching her, and she felt as if she were leaning against the steady attentiveness of his eyes

They did not speak of the Line, but she said suddenly, looking down at the liquid in her glass

"I'm thinking of the night when Nat Taggart was told that he had to abandon the bridge he was building The bridge across the Mississippi He had been desperately short of money—because people were afraid of the bridge, they called it an impractical venture. That morning, he was told that the river steamboat concerns had filed suit against him, demanding that his bridge be destroyed as a threat to the public welfare There were three spans of the bridge built, advancing across the river That same day, a local mob attacked the structure and set fire to the wooden scaffolding His workers deserted him, some because they were scared, some because they were bribed by the steamboat people, and most of them because he had had no money to pay them for weeks. Throughout that day, he kept receiving word that men who had subscribed to buy the stock of the Taggart Transcontinental Railroad were cancelling their subscriptions, one after another Toward evening, a committee, representing two banks that were his last hope of support, came to see him It was right there, on the construction site by the river, in the old railway coach where he lived, with the door open to the view of the blackened ruin, with the wooden remnants still smoking over the twisted steel He had negotiated a loan from those banks, but the contract had not been signed. The committee told him that he would have to give up his bridge, because he was certain to lose the suit, and the bridge would be ordered torn down by the time he completed it If he was willing to give it up, they said, and to ferry his passengers across the river on barges as other railroads were doing, the contract would stand and he would get the money to continue his line west on the other shore, if not, then the loan was off What was his answer?—they asked. He did not say a word he picked up the contract, tore it across, handed it to them and walked out He walked to the bridge, along the spans, down to the last girder He knelt, he picked up the tools his men had left and he started to clear the charred wreckage away from the steel structure His chief engineer saw him there, axe in hand, alone over the wide river, with the sun setting behind him in that west where his line was to go He worked there all night By morning he had thought out a plan of what he would do to find the right men, the men of independent judgment—to find them, to convince them, to raise the money, to continue the bridge."

She spoke in a low, flat voice, looking down at the spot of light that shimmered in the liquid as her fingers turned the stem of her glass once in a while She showed no emotion, but her voice had the intense monotone of a prayer:

"Francisco if he could live through that night, what right have I to complain? What does it matter, how I feel just now? He built that bridge I have to hold it for him I can't let it go the way of the bridge of the Atlantic Southern I feel almost as if he'd know it, if I let that happen, he'd know it that night when he was alone over the river . . no, that's nonsense, but here's what I feel any man who knows what Nat Taggart felt that night, any man living now and capable of knowing it—it's him that I would be- , if I let it happen . . . and I can't."

Dagny if Nat Taggart were living now, what would he do?"
She answered involuntarily, with a swift bitter chuckle "He uldn't last a minute! —then corrected herself "No, he would. would find a way to fight them."

"How?"

"I don't know"

She noticed some tense cautious quality in the attentive way he tched her as he leaned forward and asked 'Dagny, the men of ur Board of Directors are no match for Nat Taggart, are they? ere's no form of contest in which they could beat him, there's thing he'd have to fear from them, there's no mind, no will, no wer in the bunch of them to equal one-thousandth of his'

"No of course not."

"Then why is it that throughout men's history the Nat Taggarts, to make the world have always won—and always lost it to the en of the Board?"

"I don't know"

"How could men who're afraid to hold an unqualified opinion out the weather, fight Nat Taggart? How could they seize his hievement, if he chose to defend it? Dagny, he fought with every eapon he possessed, except the most important one. They could ot have won, if we—he and the rest of us—had not given the world way to them.'

"Yes You gave it away to them. Ellis Wyatt did. Ken Danagger d. I won't."

He smiled. "Who built the John Galt Line for them?'

He saw only the faintest contraction of her mouth but he knew at the question was like a blow across an open wound. Yet she nswered quietly, "I did."

"For this kind of end?"

"For the men who did not hold out, would not fight and gave p"

"Don't you see that no other end was possible?"

"No"

"How much injustice are you willing to take?"

"As much as I'm able to fight."

"What will you do now? Tomorrow?"

She said calmly, looking straight at him with the faintly proud ook of stressing her calm, "Start to tear it up"

"What?"

"The John Galt Line Start to tear it up as good as with my own ands—with my own mind, by my own instructions Get it ready to e closed [illegible]

"Dagny," he asked very quietly—and she wondered what made

her feel that he looked as if his personal fate hung on her answer, "what if it were the main line that you had to dismember?"

She answered irresistibly, "Then I'd let the last engine run over me!"—but added, "No That's just self pity I wouldn't"

He said gently, "I know you wouldn't But you'd wish you could"

"Yes"

He smiled, not looking at her; it was a mocking smile, but it was a smile of pain and the mockery was directed at himself She wondered what made her certain of it, but she knew his face so well that she would always know what he felt, even though she could not guess his reasons any longer She knew his face as well, she thought, as she knew every line of his body, as she could still see it as she was suddenly aware of it under his clothes, a few feet away, in the crowding intimacy of the booth. He turned to look at her and some sudden change in his eyes made her certain that he knew what she was thinking. He looked away and picked up his glass

"Well—" he said, "to Nat Taggart"

"And to Sebastián d'Anconia?" she asked—then regretted it, because it had sounded like mockery, which she had not intended

But she saw a look of odd, bright clarity in his eyes and he answered firmly, with the faintly proud smile of stressing his firmness, "Yes—and to Sebastián d'Anconia"

Her hand trembled a little and she spilled a few drops on the square of paper lace that lay on the dark shining plastic of the table She watched him empty his glass in a single gesture the brusque, brief movement of his hand made it look like the gesture of some solemn pledge

She thought suddenly that this was the first time in twelve years that he had come to her of his own choice

He had acted as if he were confidently in control, as if his confidence were a transfusion to let her recapture hers, he had given her no time to wonder that they should be here together Now she felt [illegible] ie It was [illegible] nless out [illegible] h his face [illegible] was now struggling for something he had to recapture

She wondered what had been his purpose tonight—and noticed that he had, perhaps, accomplished it he had carried her over the worst moment, he had given her an invaluable defense against despair—the knowledge that a living intelligence had heard her and understood But why had he wanted to do it? Why had he cared about her hour of despair—after the years of agony he had given her? Why had it mattered to him how she would take the death of the John Galt Line? She noticed that this was the question she had not asked him in the lobby of the Taggart Building

This was the bond between them, she thought that she would be astonished if he came when she needed him most, and he would always know when to come This was the danger

at she would trust him, even while knowing that it could be nothing but some new kind of trap, even while remembering that he would always betray those who trusted him

He sat, leaning forward with his arms crossed on the table, looking straight ahead He said suddenly, not turning to her

"I am thinking of the fifteen years that Sebastián d Anconia had to wait for the woman he loved He did not know whether he would ever find her again, whether she would survive whether she would wait for him But he knew that she could not live through his battle and that he could not call her to him until it was won So he waited holding his love in the place of the hope which he had no right to hold But when he carried her across the threshold of his house, as the first Señora d'Anconia of a new world, he knew that the battle was won, that they were free, that nothing threatened her and nothing would ever hurt her again '

In the days of their passionate happiness, he had never given her a hint that he would come to think of her as Señora d Anconia For one moment, she wondered whether she had known what she had meant to him. But the moment ended in an invisible shudder she would not believe that the past twelve years could allow the things he was hearing to be possible This was the new trap, she thought

"Francisco," she asked, her voice hard, "what have you done to Hank Rearden?"

He looked startled that she should think of that name at that moment "Why?" he asked

"He told me once that you were the only man he d ever liked But last time I saw him, he said he would kill you on sight."

'He did not tell you why?"

"No"

"He told you nothing about it?"

"No" She saw him smiling strangely a smile of sadness gratitude and longing "I warned him that you would hurt him—when he told me that you were the only man he liked'

His words came like a sudden explosion "He was the only man—with one exception—to whom I could have given my life!"

"Who is the exception?"

"The man to whom I have"

"What do you mean?"

He shook his head, as if he had said more than he intended, and did not answer

"What did you do to Rearden?"

"I'll tell you some time Not now"

"Is that what you always do to those who . mean a great deal to you?"

He looked at her with a smile that had the luminous sincerity of innocence and pain "You know," he said gently I could say that that is what they always do to me" He added, "But I won't. The actions—and the knowledge—were mine"

He stood up "Shall we go? I'll take you home"

She rose and he held her coat for her, it was a wide loose garment, and his hands guided it to enfold her body She felt his arm

room of a house with a sagging roof and cracking walls She wondered how long they expected the electric power companies of Colorado to remain in existence Then she shook her head those people had never known that power companies existed

The main street of Marshville was lined by the black windows of [illegible] —she thought, what things what manner those things once available to the poorest had been luxuries Dry Cleaning—Electrical Appliances—Gas Station—Drug Store—Five and Ten The only ones left open were grocery stores and saloons

The platform of the railroad station was crowded. The glaring arc lights seemed to pick it out of the mountains to isolate and focus it like a small stage on which every movement was naked to the sight of the unseen tiers rising in the vast encircling night. People were carting luggage bundling their children haggling at ticket windows the stifled panic of their manner suggesting that what they really wanted to do was to fall down on the ground and scream with terror Their terror had the evasive quality of guilt it was not the fear that comes from understanding but from the refusal to understand

The last train stood at the platform its windows a long lone streak of light The steam of the locomotive, gasping tensely through the wheels did not have its usual joyous sound of energy released for a sprint it had the sound of a panting breath that one dreads to hear and dreads more to stop hearing Far at the end of the lighted windows she saw the small red dot of a lantern attached to her private car Beyond the lantern there was nothing but a black void

The train was loaded to capacity and the shrill notes of hysteria [illegible] n vestibules and [illegible] was the [illegible] in their lives

She walked hastily through the crowd trying not to look at anyone Some knew who she was most of them did not She saw an old woman with a ragged shawl on her shoulders and the graph of a lifetime s struggle on the cracked skin of her face the woman s glance was a hopeless appeal for help An unshaved young man with gold rimmed glasses stood on a crate under an arc light yelling to the faces shifting past him "What do they mean no business! Look at that train! It s full of passengers! There's plenty of business! It s just that there s no profits for them—that s why they re letting you perish those greedy parasites!" A disheveled woman rushed up to Dagny waving two tickets and screaming something about the wrong date Dagny found herself pushing people out of the way fighting to reach the end [illegible] man with the staring eyes of ye[illegible] ing "It s all right for [illegible] but you won t g[illegible]

stopped abruptly, looking at someone behind her She felt a hand ping her elbow it was Hank Rearden He held her arm and led toward her car, seeing the look on his face she understood why ple got out of their way At the end of the platform a pallid, npish man stood saying to a crying woman "Thats how its ays been in this world There will be no chance for the poor, l the rich are destroyed" High above the town hanging in black e like an uncooled planet, the flame of Wyatt s Torch was twist in the wind.

learden went inside her car, but she remained on the steps of the ibule delaying the finality of turning away She heard the All ard!" She looked at the people who remained on the platform one looks at those who watch the departure of the last lifeboat. he conductor stood below, at the foot of the steps with his lan in one hand and his watch in the other He glanced at the ch then glanced up at her face She answered by the silent rmation of closing her eyes and inclining her head She saw his tern circling through the air as she turned away—and the first of the wheels on the rails of Rearden Metal was made easier her by the sight of Rearden, as she pulled the door open and it into her car

* *

When James Taggart telephoned Lillian Rearden from New York said, "Why no—no special reason just wondered how you were l whether you ever came to the city—haven t seen you for ages l just thought we might have lunch together next time you re in w York"—she knew that be had some very special reason in nd.

When she answered lazily "Oh, let me see—what day is this? ril second?—let me look at my calendar—why it just so happens it I have some shopping to do in New York tomorrow so I'll be lighted to let you save me my lunch money"—he knew that she d no shopping to do and that the luncheon would be the only

restaurant much too entioned in the gossip Taggart always eager personal publicity was in the habit of patronizing he did not nt them to be seen together, she concluded

The half hint of half-secret amusement remained on her face while e listened to him talking about their friends the theater and the ather, carefully building for himself the protection of the unim rtant. She sat gracefully not quite straight as if she were leaning ck, enjoying the futility of his performance and the fact that he d to stage it for her benefit. She waited with patient curiosity to scover his purpose

"I do think that you deserve a pat on the back or a medal or mething, Jim" she said "for being remarkably cheerful in spite all the messy trouble you re having Didn t you just close the best anch of your railroad?

"Oh, it s only a slight financial setback, nothing more One has to

expect retrenchments at a time like this Considering the gene state of the country, we re doing quite well Better than the rest them He added shrugging Besides, it s a matter of opin whether the Rio Norte Line was our best branch It is only m sister who thought so It was her pet project."

She caught the tone of pleasure blurring the drawl of his syllable She smiled and said I see"

Looking up at her from under his lowered forehead as if stres ing that he expected her to understand, Taggart asked, "How is h taking it?

"Who? She understood quite well.

"Your husband

"Taking what?

"The closing of that Line"

She smiled gaily Your guess is as good as mine Jim—and min is very good indeed

What do you mean?"

"You know how he would take it—just as you know how you sister is taking it So your cloud has a double silver lining hasn' it?

What has he been saying in the last few days?"

"He s been away in Colorado for over a week so I—" She stopped she had started answering lightly but she noticed tha Taggart's question had been too specific while his tone had been too casual and she real ... note leading

the briefest

know But

would you say that his attitude is still what one might call recal citrant?'

"Why, Jim that would be an understatement!"

It was to be hoped that events had, perhaps, taught him the wisdom of a mellower approach"

It amused her to keep him in doubt about her understanding. "Oh yes' she said innocently, "it would be wonderful if anything could ever make him change"

"He is making things exceedingly hard for himself."

"He always has'

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natu ... re in for a very difficult time, and I would hate to see you suffer the consequences of his intransigent attitude I would hate—as your friend—to see you in the kind of danger he s headed for unless *he learns to cooperate*"

"How sweet of you, *Jim*,' she said sweetly

He was doling his sentences out with cautious slowness, balancing nself between word and intonation to hit the right degree of mi-clarity He wanted her to understand but he did not want her understand fully, explicitly, down to the root—since the essence that modern language, which he had learned to speak expertly, as never to let oneself or others understand anything down to the ot

He had not needed many words to understand Mr Weatherby n his last trip to Washington, he had pleaded with Mr Weatherby at a cut in the rates of the railroads would be a deathblow, the age raises had been granted, but the demands for the cut in rates ere still heard in the press—and Taggart had known what it eant, if Mr Mouch still permitted them to be heard, he had nown that the knife was still poised at his throat Mr Weatherby ad not answered his pleas, but had said, in a tone of idly irrelevant peculation, "Wesley has so many tough problems If he is to give verybody a breathing spell, financially speaking he s got to put nto operation a certain emergency program of which you have ome inkling But you know what hell the unprogressive elements of he country would raise about it A man like Rearden for instance Ve don't want any more stunts of the sort he s liable to pull Wes ey would give a lot for somebody who could keep Rearden in line But I guess the [illegible] Though I may be [illegible] a sort of friend [illegible] "Friendship, I und, is the most valuable thing in life—and I would be amiss if I didn't give you proof of mine"

"But I've never doubted it"

He lowered his voice to the tone of an ominous warning "I think I should tell you as a favor to a friend although it s confidential, that your husband s attitude is being discussed in high places—very high places I m sure you know what I mean"

This was why he hated Lillian Rearden thought Taggart she knew the game, but she played it with unexpected variations of her own. It was against all rules to look at him suddenly to laugh in his face and—after all those remarks showing that she under stood too little—to say bluntly, showing that she understood too much, "Why, darling, of course I know what you mean You mean that the purpose of this very excellent luncheon was not a favor you wanted to do me, but a favor you wanted to get from me You mean that it s you who are in danger and could use that favor to great advantage for a trade in high places And you mean that you are reminding me of my promise to deliver the goods"

"The sort of performance he put on at his trial was hardly what I'd call delivering the goods," he said angrily "It wasn t what you had led me to expect'

"Oh my, no it wasn't" she said placidly "It certainly wasn't. But, darling did you expect me not to know that after that performance of his he wouldn't be very popular in high [illegible] really think you had to tell me *that* as a confidential

"But it's true I heard him discussed, so I thought I'd tell you."

"I'm sure it's true I know that they would be discussing him. I [illegible] they [illegible] been [illegible] in no danger [illegible] afraid of him [illegible] darling?"

"Well, if you think you do, I must say that for my part I don't understand you at all I don't know what it is you're doing"

"Why, I'm just setting things straight—so that you'll know that I know how much you need me. And now that it's straight, I'll tell you the truth in my turn I didn't double-cross you, I merely failed His performance at the trial—I didn't expect it any more than you did Less I had good reason not to expect it. But something went wrong I don't know what it was I am trying to find out When I do, I will keep my promise Then you'll be free to take full credit for it and to tell your friends in high places that it's you who've disarmed him"

"Lillian,' he said nervously, "I meant it when I said that I was anxious to give you proof of my friendship—so if there's anything I can do for—"

She laughed "There isn't. I know you meant it But there's nothing you can do for me No favor of any kind No trade I'm a truly non-commercial person, I want nothing in return Tough luck, Jim You'll just have to remain at my mercy"

"But then why should you want to do it at all? What are you getting out of it?"

She leaned back, smiling "This lunch Just seeing you here Just knowing that you had to come to me"

An angry spark flashed in Taggart's veiled eyes, then his eyelids narrowed slowly and he, too, leaned back in his chair, his face relaxing to a faint look of mockery and satisfaction. Even from within that unstated, unnamed, undefined muck which represented his code of values, he was able to realize which one of them was the more dependent on the other and the more contemptible.

When they parted at the door of the restaurant, she went to Rearden's suite at the Wayne-Falkland Hotel, where she stayed occasionally in his absence She paced the room for about half an hour, in a leisurely manner of reflection Then she picked up the telephone, with a smoothly casual gesture, but with the purposeful air of a decision reached [illegible] mills and asked Mrs. [illegible] arriving on the [illegible] teous voice. [illegible] ld you do me a favc [illegible] l tell her not to expect me for dinner? I'm staying in New York overnight."

She hung up, glanced at her watch and called the florist of the Wayne Falkland "This is Mrs Henry Rearden" she said "I should [illegible] to have two dozen roses delivered to Mr. Rearden's drawing

om aboard the Comet. . . . Yes, today, this afternoon, when the
omet reaches Chicago . . . No, without any card—just the
wers . . . Thank you ever so much "

She telephoned James Taggart "Jim, will you send me a pass to ur passenger platforms? I want to meet my husband at the station morrow"

She hesitated between Balph Eubank and Bertram Scudder, chose lph Eubank, telephoned him and made a date for this evening s nner and a musical show Then she went to take a bath, and lay laxing in a tub of warm water, reading a magazine devoted to oblems of political economy

It was late afternoon when the florist telephoned her "Our Chigo office sent word that they were unable to deliver the flowers, rs Rearden," he said, "because Mr Rearden is not aboard the omet"

"Are you sure?" she asked

"Quite sure, Mrs Rearden Our man found at the station in hicago that there was no compartment on the train reserved in r Rearden's name We checked with the New York office of aggart Transcontinental, just to make certain and were told that r Rearden s name is not on the passenger list of the Comet '

"I see . . . Then cancel the order, please Thank you"

She sat by the telephone for a moment, frowning then called
Miss Ives "Pl [illegible]
ves
just
om

"Yes Mrs Rearden"

"You have not heard of any delay or change in his plans?"

"Why, no In fact, I spoke to Mr Rearden about an hour ago He telephoned from the station in Chicago and he mentioned that he had to hurry back aboard, as the Comet was about to leave"

"I see Thank you"

She leaped to her feet as soon as the click of the instrument restored her to privacy She started pacing the room her steps now unrhythmically tense Then she stopped struck by a sudden thought There was only one reason why a man would make a train reservation under an assumed name if he was not traveling alone

Her facial muscles went flowing slowly into a smile of satisfaction this was an opportunity she had not expected.

* *

[illegible]

ew figures, the train had seemed to burst at the seams, [illegible]

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Her first sight of Rearden in the crowd came as a shock sh h
not seen him step out of a car but there he was walking in th
direction from somewhere far down the length of the train. He w
alone H

speed his han
oman beside hi
ing along with

In a fury of incredulous disappointment she looked frantical
for any single feminine figure he could have left behind She f
certain that she w ... that cou
be po
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Dagn ... Then Lillian Rearden understood.

Lillian! What s the matter?

She heard Rearden s voice she felt his hand grasping her ar
she saw him looking at her as one looks at the object of a sudd
emergency He was looking at a blank face and an unfocused gla
of terror

"What happened? What are you doing here?"

"I Hello Henry I just came to meet you No s
cial reason I just wanted to meet you" The terror was go
from her face but she spoke in a strange flat voice "I wanted
see you it was an impulse a sudden impulse and I couldn t resi
because—"

But you look looked ill"

"No ... I could

son

She knew that she had to speak while her mind was fighting
grasp the full meaning of her discovery The words were part of
plan she h d ...

... mo ed with effort the eyes ...
glancing away from him down the length of the platform "I wan
I merely wanted to surprise you" A look of shrewdness a
purpose was returning to her face

He took her arm but she drew back a little too sharply

"Aren t you going to say a word to me Henry?"

"What do you wish me to say?"

"Do you hate it as much as that—having your wife come to meet ---- at the station?" She glanced down the platform Dagny Tag was walking toward them, he did not see her

Let's go" he said

he would not move "Do you? she asked.

What?"

Do you hate it?"

No I don't hate it I merely don't understand it"

Tell me about your trip I'm sure you've had a very enjoyable ,"

Come on We can talk at home"

'When do I ever have a chance to talk to you at home?" She s drawling her words impassively, as if she were stretching them fill time for some reason which he could not imagine "I had ped to catch a few moments of your attention—like this—be ... all those important

"How do you do" she said to Lillian bowing her face expres- nless

"I am so sorry, Miss Taggart" said Lillian smiling "you must rgive me if I don't know the appropriate formula of condolences r the occasion She noted that Dagny and Rearden had not eeted each other "You're returning from what was, in effect the neral ... ?"

... of con ... lked on ... rate em ... when he ... lf turned ... lotel He

elt certain, as he looked at the tautly twisted set of her mouth at some uncustomary violence was raging within her He had ever known her to experience a strong emotion of any kind

She whirled to face him the moment they were alone in his room "... asked ... quite believing that ... she?"

He did not answer

"I happen to know that you had no compartment on that train o I know where you've slept for the last four nights Do you want o admit it or do you want me to send detectives to question her rain crews and her house servants? Is it Dagny Taggart?"

"Yes" he answered calmly

Her mouth twisted into an ugly chuckle, she was staring past h

"I should have known it, I should have guessed. That's why it did work!"

He asked, in blank bewilderment, "What didn t work?"

She stepped back, as if to remind herself of his presence. "Had you—when she was in our house, at the party—had you, then . . ?"

'No Since

"The great businesswoman," she said, "above reproach and feminine weaknesses The great mind detached from any concern with the body " She chuckled "The bracelet . . ." she said, with the still look that made it sound as if the words were dropped accidentally out of the torrent in her mind "That's what she meant to you That's the weapon she gave you "

"If you really understand what you're saying—yes "

"Do you think I ll let you get away with it?'

"Get away ?" He was looking at her incredulously, in cold, astonished curiosity

"That's why, at your trial—" She stopped.

"What about my trial?"

She was trembling "You know, of course, that I won't allow this to continue '

"What does it have to do with my trial?"

"I won't permit you to have her Not her Anyone but her"

He let a moment pass then asked evenly, "Why?'

"I won't permit it! You'll give it up!" He was looking at her without expression, but the steadiness of his eyes hit her as his most dangerous answer 'You ll give it up, you ll leave her, you'll never see her again!'

"Lillian, if you wish to discuss it, there's one thing you'd better understand nothing on earth will make me give it up."

"But I demand it!"

"I told you that you could demand anything but that"

He saw the look of a peculiar panic growing in her eyes it was not the look of understanding, but of a ferocious refusal to understand—as if she wanted to turn the violence of her emotion into a fog screen, as if she hoped, not that it would blind her to reality, but that her blindness would make reality cease to exist

"But I have the right to demand it! I own your life! It's my property My property—by your own oath You swore to serve my happiness Not yours—mine! What have you done for me? You've

never been con-

r mills, your tal-

aim! I'm present-

It was the look on his face that drove her up the rising steps of her voice, scream by scream, into terror She was seeing, not anger or pain or guilt, but the one inviolate enemy indifference

"Have you thought of me?' she screamed, her voice breaking against his face "Have you thought of what you're doing to me? You have no right to go on, if you know that you're putting me through hell every time you sleep with that woman! I can t stand ' I can't stand one moment of knowing it! Will you sacrifice me to

your animal desire? Are you as vicious and selfish as that? Can you buy your pleasure at the price of my suffering? Can you have it, if

livered, in snarling hatred, as threats and as demands

"Lillian," he said very quietly, "I would have it, even if it took your life"

She heard it She heard more than he was ready to know and to hear in his own words The shock, to him, was that she did not scream in answer, but that he saw her, instead, shrinking down into calm. "You have no right . " she said dully It had the embarrassing helplessness of the words of a person who knows her own words to be meaningless

"Whatever claim you may have on me," he said, "no human being can hold on another a claim demanding that he wipe himself out of existence"

"Does she mean as much as that to you?"

"Much more than that."

The look of thought ... to her face, but in her face it

It is all I can offer you. I think you know I want you to divorce me But I don't ask for sacrifices I don't know what sort of comfort you can find in our marriage, but if you do, I won't ask you to give it up I don't know why you should want to hold me now, I don't know what it is that I mean to you. I don't know what you're seeking, what form of happiness ... or what you will obtain from a

standards ... I never ... ave But

to me about her, you must never show her that you kno ...

meet her ... never touch that part of my life"

her body

ince as if

a graceful

bearing

"Miss Dagny Taggart . ." she said, and chuckled "The super woman whom common, average wives were not supposed to

pect The woman who cared for nothing but business and dealt with men as a man The woman of great spirit who admired you platonically just for your genius, your mills and your Metal! She chuckled 'I should have known that she was just a bitch who wanted you in the same way as any bitch would want you—because you are fully as expert in bed as you are at a desk, if I am a judge of such matters But she would appreciate that better than I, since she worships expertness of any kind and since she has probably been laid by every section hand on her railroad!"

She stopped, because she saw, for the first time in her life, by what sort of look one learns that a man is capable of killing But he was not looking at her She was not sure whether he was seeing her at all or hearing her voice

He was hearing his own voice saying her words—saying them to Dagny in the sun striped bedroom of Ellis Wyatt s house He was seeing in the nights behind him, Dagny's face in those moments when, his body leaving hers, she lay still with a look of radiance that was more than a smile a look of youth, of early morning, of gratitude to the fact of one s own existence And he was seeing Lillian s face as he had seen it in bed beside him, a lifeless face with evasive eyes, with some feeble sneer on its lips and the look of sharing some smutty guilt He saw who was the accuser and who the accused—he saw the obscenity of letting impotence hold itself as virtue and damn the power of living as a sin—he saw, with the clarity of direct perception, in the shock of a single instant, the terr ble

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resence that

had to be dealt with at the moment

"Lillian," he said, in an unstressed voice that did not grant her even the honor of anger, "you are not to speak of her to me If you ever do it again, I will answer you as I would answer a hoodlum I will beat you up Neither you nor anyone else is to discuss her"

She glanced at him "Really?' she said It had an odd, casual sound—as if the word were tossed away, leaving some hook implanted in her mind She seemed to be considering some sudden vision of her own

He said quietly, in weary astonishment, "I thought you would be glad to discover the truth I thought you would prefer to know—for the sake of whatever love or respect you felt for me—that if I betrayed you, it was not cheaply and casually, it was not for a chorus girl, but for the cleanest and most serious feeling of my life"

The ferocious spring with which she whirled to him was involuntary, as was the naked twist of hatred in her face "Oh, you god damn fool!"

He remained silent

Her composure returned, with the faint suggestion of a smile of t mockery "I believe you're waiting for my answer?" she said.

"No, I won't divorce you Don't ever hope for that We shall continue as we are—if that is what you offered and if you think it can continue See whether you can flout all moral principles and get away with it!"

He did not listen to her while she reached for her coat, telling him that she was going back to their home. He barely noticed it [illegible]

[illegible]

him what Lillian felt, what she suffered or what became of her, and more not only that it did not matter, but the shining, guiltless knowledge that it did not have to matter.

Chapter VI MIRACLE METAL

"But can we get away with it?" asked Wesley Mouch. His voice was high with anger and thin with fear

[illegible] ch[illegible] Bo[illegible] cig[illegible] hands Fred Kinnan, head of the Amalgamated Labor of America, stopped pacing the office, sat down on the window sill and crossed his arms Eugene Lawson, who had sat hunched downward, absentmindedly rearranging a display of flowers on a low glass table, raised his torso resentfully and glanced up Mouch sat at his desk, with his fist on a sheet of paper.

It was Eugene Lawson who answered "That's not, it seems to me, the way to put it. We must not let vulgar difficulties obstruct our feeling that it's a noble plan motivated solely by the public welfare It's [illegible] Need comes first, [illegible] Lawson had [illegible] small man who sat unobtrusively in the best armchair of the room, apart from the others, content to be ignored and fully aware that none of them could be unconscious of his presence, glanced at Lawson, then at Mouch, and said with brisk cheerfulness, "That's the line, Wesley. Tone it down and dress it up and get your press boys to chant it—and you won't have to worry"

"Yes, Mr. Thompson," said Mouch glumly

Mr Thompson, the Head of the State, was a man who possessed the quality of never being noticed In any group of three, his person became indistinguishable, and when seen alone it seemed to evoke group of its [illegible] of the countless persons he

The country had no clear image of what he looked like his photographs had appeared on the covers of magazines as frequently as those of his predecessors in office, but people could never be quite certain which photographs were his and which were pictures of "a mail clerk" or "*a* white-collar worker," accompanying articles about the daily life of the undifferentiated—except that Mr Thompson's collars were usually wilted He had broad shoulders and a sligh body He had stringy hair, a wide mouth and an elastic age rang that made him look like a harassed forty or an unusually vigorou sixty Holding enormous official powers, he schemed ceaselessly t expand them, because it was expected of him by those who ha pushed him into office He had the cunning of the unintelligent an the frantic energy of the lazy The sole secret of his rise in life wa the fact that he was a product of chance and knew it and aspired t nothing else

"It's obvious that measures have to be taken Drastic measures said James Taggart speaking, not to Mr Thompson, but to Wesley Mouch "We can t let things go the way they're going much longer" His voice was belligerent and shaky

"Take it easy Jim," said Orren Boyle

"Something s got to be done and done fast!"

"Don't look at *me*" snapped Wesley Mouch "I can't help it. I can't help it if people refuse to co-operate I'm tied I need wider powers"

Mouch had summoned them all to Washington, as his friends and personal advisers, for a private, unofficial conference on the national crisis But, watching him they were unable to decide whether his manner was overbearing or whining, whether he was threatening them or pleading for their help

"Fact is," said Mr Weatherby primly, in a statistical tone of voice, "that in the twelve month period ending on the first of this year, the rate of business failures has doubled, as compared with the preceding twelve month period Since the first of this year, it has trebled"

"Be sure they think it's their own fault," said Dr Ferris casually

"Huh? said Wesley Mouch, his eyes darting to Ferris

"Whatever you do, don't apologize," said Dr Ferris "Make them feel guilty"

"I m not apologizing!" snapped Mouch "I'm not to blame I need wider powers"

"But it *is* their own fault," said Eugene Lawson, turning aggressively to Dr Ferris "It s their lack of social spirit They refuse to recognize that production is not a private choice, but a public duty They have no right to fail, no matter what conditions happen to come up They've *got* to go on producing It's a social imperative A man's work is not a personal matter, it's a social matter. There's no such thing as a personal matter—or a personal life *That's* what we've got to force them to learn."

"Gene Lawson knows what I'm talking about," said Dr Ferris, ith a slight smile, "even though he hasn't the faintest idea that he

"What do you think you mean?" asked Lawson, his voice rising

"Skip it," ordered Wesley Mouch

"I don t care what you decide to do, Wesley," said Mr Thompson, "and I don t care if the businessmen squawk about it Just be sure you ve got the press with you Be damn sure about that"

"I've got 'em," said Mouch

"One editor who'd open his trap at the wrong time could do us more harm than ten disgruntled millionaires"

"That s true, Mr Thompson," said Dr Ferris "But can you name one editor who knows it?"

"Guess not," said Thompson, he sounded pleased

"Whatever type of men we're counting on and planning for," said Dr Ferris, "there s a certain old fashioned quotation which we may safely forget the one about counting on the wise and the honest. We don't have to consider them They re out of date"

James Taggart glanced at the window There were patches of blue in the sky above the spacious streets of Washington, the faint blue of mid April, and a few beams breaking through the clouds A monument stood shining in the distance, hit by a ray of sun it was a tall [illegible] of the man Dr Ferris [illegible] city had been named

[illegible] like the professor's remarks," said Lawson loudly and sullenly

"Keep still," said Wesley Mouch "Dr Ferris is not talking theory, but practice."

"Well, if you want to talk practice," said Fred Kinnan "then let me tell you that we can t worry about businessmen at a time like this What we've got to think about is jobs More jobs for the people In my unions, every man who s working is feeding five who aren't, not counting his own pack of starving relatives If you want my advice—oh, I know you won t go for it, but it s just a thought—issue a directive making it compulsory to add, say one-third more men to every payroll in the country

"Good God!" yelled Taggart. "Are you crazy? We can barely meet our payrolls as it is! There's not enough work for the men we've got now! One third more? We wouldn t have any use for them whatever!"

"Who cares whether you'd have any use for them?" said Fred Kinnan "They need jobs That s what comes first—*need*—doesn t it? —not your profits"

"It's not a question of profits!" yelled Taggart hastily "I haven't said anything about profits I haven't given you any grounds to insult me It s just a question of where in hell we d get the money to pay your men—when half our trains are running empty and there s not enough freight to fill a trolley car" His voice slowed down [illegible] thoughtfulness "However, we do

on the rates you're charging now, I shudder every time a dam

Just look at my balance sheet—and then look at the books o
—are all the raw

to get a subsidy to carry me over the next year or two, unti I catch my stride and—"

"What? Again?' yelled Mr. We ... ness "How

... people who aren't broke," said Boyle slowly ... boys have no excuse for permitting all that need and misery to spread through the country—so long as there are people who aren't broke"

"I can't help it!" yelled Wesley Mouch "I can't do anything about it! I need wider powers!"

They could not tell ... to attend

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to

and smiled cheerfully

'Go ahead, Wesley," he said "Go ahead with Number 10-289 You won't have any trouble at all"

They had all risen to their feet, in gloomily reluctant deference. Wesley Mouch glanced down at his sheet of paper, then said in a petulant tone of voice, "If you want me to go ahead, you'll have to declare a state of total emergency"

"I'll declare it any time you're ready."

"There are certain difficulties, which—"

"I'll leave it up to you Work it out any way you wish It's your job Let me see the rough draft, tomorrow or next day, but don't bother me about the details I've got a speech to make on the radio

actually

directive

Oh hell, we've passed so many emergency laws that if you hunt through them, you're sure to dig up something that will cover it."

Mr Thompson turned to the others with a smile of good fellow-

"I'll leave you boys to iron out the wrinkles," he said. "I

ppreciate your coming to Washington to help us out. Glad to have seen you"

They waited until the door closed after him, then resumed their

method, they now wished it were possible for them not to hear the words of the directive It was to avoid moments such as this that all the complex twistings of their minds had been devised

They wished the directive to go into effect They wished it could be put into effect without words, so that they would not have to know that what they were doing was what it was Nobody had ever announced that Directive No 10-289 was the final goal of his efforts Yet, for generations past, men had worked to make it possible, and for months past, every provision of it had been prepared for by countless speeches, articles, sermons, editorials—by purposeful voices that screamed with anger if anyone named their purpose

"The picture now is this," said Wesley Mouch "The economic condition of the country was better the year before last than it was last year, and last year it was better than it is at present. It s obvious that we would not be able to survive another year of the same progression Therefore, our sole objective must now be to hold the line To stand still in order to catch our stride To achieve total stability Freedom has been given a chance and has failed Therefore, more stringent controls are necessary Since men are unable and unwilling to solve their problems voluntarily, they must be forced to do it." He paused, picked up the sheet of paper, then added in a less formal tone of voice, "Hell, what it comes down to is that we can manage to exist as and where we are, but we can t afford to move! So we've got to stand still We ve got to stand still We've got to make those bastards stand still!"

His head drawn into his shoulders, he was looking at them with the anger of a man declaring that the country s troubles were a personal affront to him So many men seeking favors had been afraid of h

thin

get

bef

room was their own emotion or whether the hunched figure behind the desk generated the panic of a cornered rat.

Wesley Mouch had a long, square face and a flat topped skull, made more so by a brush haircut His lower lip was a petulant bulb and the pale, brownish pupils of his eyes looked like the yolks of eggs smeared under the not fully translucent whites His facial muscles moved abruptly, and the movement vanished, having conveyed no expression. No one had ever seen him smile

Wesley Mouch came from a family that had known neither poverty nor wealth nor distinction for many generations, it had clu however, to a its own· that of being college bred

therefore of despising men who were in business The family's diplomas had always hung on the wall in the manner of a reproach to the world because the diplomas had not automatically produced the material equivalents of their attested spiritual value Among the family s numerous relatives, there was one rich uncle He had married his money and in his widowed old age, he had picked Wesley as his favorite from among his many nephews and nieces because Wesley was the least distinguished of the lot and therefore thought Uncle Julius the safest Uncle Julius did not care for people who were brilliant He did not care for the trouble of managing his money either so he turned the job over to Wesley By the time Wesley graduated from college there was no money to manage. Uncle Julius blamed it on Wesley s cunning and cried that Wesley was an unscrupulous schemer But there had been no scheme about it Wesley could not have said just where the money had gone In high school Wesley Mouch had been one of the worst students and had passionately envied those who were the best College taught him that he did not have to envy them at all After graduation, he took a job in the advertising department of a company that manufactured a bogus corn-cure The cure sold well and he rose to be the head of his department He left it to take charge of the advertising of a hair restorer then of a patented brassiere then of a new soap then of a soft drink—and then he became advertising vice president of an automobile concern He tried to sell automobiles as if they were a bogus corn-cure They did not sell He blamed it on the insufficiency of his advertising budget It was the president of the automobile concern who recommended him to Rearden It was Rearden who introduced him to Washington—Rearden who knew no standard by which to judge the activities of his Washington man It was James Taggart who gave him a start in the Bureau of Economic

double-crossing

e for destroying

sley Mouch to

advance for the same reason as that which had prompted Uncle Julius they were people who believed that mediocrity was safe. The men who now sat in front of his desk had been taught that the law of causality was a superstition and that one had to deal with the situation of the moment without considering its cause By the situation of the moment [illegible] Wesley Mouch

we [illegible] pired

to [illegible] within

th [illegible] zero

at the meeting point of forces unleashed in destruction against one another

"This is just a rough draft of Directive Number 10-289" said Wesley Mouch "which Gene Clem and I have dashed off just to give you the general idea We want to hear your opinions suggestions and so forth—you being the representatives of labor industry transportation and the professions"

Fred Kinnan got off the window sill and sat down on the arm of chair Orren Boyle spit out the butt of his cigar James Taggart

nt nor leave nor retire, nor close, sell or transfer their business nder penalty of the nationalization of their establishment and of ny and all of their property

"Point Three All patents and copyrights, pertaining to any devices, inventions, formulas, processes and works of any nature hatso-

gency

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manufacturers under the same name, such name to be selected by the Unification Board All private trademarks and brand names are hereby abolished.

"Point Four No new devices, inventions, products, or goods of any nature whatsoever, not now on the market, shall be produced, invented manufactured or sold after the date of this directive The Office of Patents and Copyrights is hereby suspended

"Point Five Every establishment, concern, corporation or person engaged in production of any nature whatsoever shall henceforth produce the same amount of goods per year as it, they or he produced during the Basic Year, no more and no less The year to be known as the Basic or Yardstick Year is to be the year ending on the date of this directive Over or under production shall be fined such fines to be determined by the Unification Board

"Point Six. Every person of any age, sex, class or income, shall henceforth spend the same amount of money on the purchase of goods per year as he or she spent during the Basic Year, no more and no less Over or under purchasing shall be fined such fines to be determined by the Unification Board

"Point Seven All wages, prices, salaries, dividends, profits, int

est rates and fo ... s it be frozen at their p ... o-

Point Eight ... be vided for in th...

Unification Board whose decisions will be final

There was even within the four men who had listened a remnant of human dignity which made them sit still and feel sick for the length of one minute

James Taggart spoke first His voice was low but it had the trembling intensity of an involuntary scream "Well, why not? Why should they have it if we don t? Why should they stand above us? If we are to perish let s make sure that we all perish together Let's make sure that we leave them no chance to survive!

Thats a damn funny thing to say about a very practical plan that will benefit everybody said Orren Boyle shrilly looking at Taggart in frightened astonishment

Dr Ferris chuckled

Taggart s eyes seemed to focus and he said his voice louder "Yes of course It s a very practical plan It s necessary practical and just It will solve everybody s problems It will give everybody a chance to feel safe A chance to rest.

It will give security to the people" said Eugene Lawson his mouth slithering into a smile Security—that s what the people want If they want it why shouldn t they have it? Just because a handful of rich will object?

"It s not the rich who'll object said Dr Ferris lazily "The rich drool for security more than any other sort of animal—haven t you discovered that yet?

"Well who'll object? snapped Lawson

Dr Ferris smiled pointedly and did not answer

Lawson looked away To hell with them! Why should we worry about *them*? We've got to run the world for the sake of the little people It s intelligence that s caused all the troubles of humanity Man s mind is the root of all evil This is the day of the heart. It s the weak the meek the sick and the humble that must be the only objects of our concern His lower lip was twisting in soft, lecherous motions "Those who re big are here to serve those who aren't. If they refuse to do their moral duty, we've got to force them There once was an Age of Reason, but we've progressed beyond it. This is the Age of Love

'Shut up!" screamed James Taggart.

They all stared at him "For Christ s sake Jim what s the matter?" said Orren Boyle shaking

"Nothing, said Taggart "nothing . Wesley keep him still, will you?"

Mouch said uncomfortably But I fail to see—"

Just keep him still We don t have to listen to him do we?"

"Why no *but*—"

"Then let s go on"

"What is this?" demanded Lawson "I resent it I most emphatically—" But he saw no support in the faces around him and stopped,

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an
un-

ned in all their minds "There's no such thing as the intellect A
n's brain is a social product A sum of influences that he's picked
from those around him Nobody invents anything, he merely
flects what's floating in the social atmosphere A genius is an in-
lectual scavanger and a greedy hoarder of the ideas which

uoplitter

"All I've got to say is that you'd better staff that Unification Board with my men," he said 'Better make sure of it, brother—or I'll blast your Point One to hell "

"I intend, of course, to have a representative of labor on that Board" ... tative of industry,

"Just representa-

"What the hell!" yelled Orren Boyle "That's stacking the cards, isn't it?"

"Sure," said Fred Kinnan.

"But that will give *you* a stranglehold on every business in the country!"

"What do you think I'm after?"

"That's unfair!" yelled Boyle "I won't stand for it! You have no right! You—"

"Right?" said Kinnan innocently "Are we talking about rights?"

"But, I mean, after all, there are certain fundamental property rights which—"

"Listen, pal, you want Point Three, don't you?"

"Well, I—"

"Then you'd better keep your trap shut about property rights from now on Keep it shut tight "

"Mr Kinnan," said Dr Ferris, "you must not make the old fashioned m ... Our policy has to be ... ich—"

"S ... "I know

I'm t ...

"I object" said Boyle, "to your dictatorial method of—"

Kinnan turned his back on him and said, "Listen, Wesley m boys won t like Point One If I get to run things, I'll make the swallow it If not, not Just make up your mind"

'Well— said Mouch, and stopped

'For Christ s sake Wesley, what about us?" yelled Taggart.

"You ll come to me," said Kinnan, "when you'll need a deal t fix the Board But I ll run that Board Me and Wesley"

Do you think the country will stand for it?" yelled Taggart.

Stop kidding yourself," said Kinnan "The country? If the aren t any principles any more—and I guess the doc is right, becau there sure aren t—if there aren t any rules to this game and it s on a question of who robs whom—then I've got more votes than t bunch of you there are more workers than employers, and do you forget it boys!

'That s a funny attitude to take," said Taggart haughtily, "abo a measure which, after all, is not designed for the selfish benefit workers or employers, but for the general welfare of the public"

'Okay," said Kinnan amiably, "let's talk your lingo Who is t public? If you go by quality—then it ain't you, Jim, and it ai Orrie Boyle If you go by quantity—then it sure is *me* becau quantity is what I ve got behind me" His smile disappeared, a with a sudden, bitter look of weariness he added, "Only I m n going to say that I'm working for the welfare of my public, becau I know I m not I know that I'm delivering the poor bastards in slavery, and that's all there is to it And they know it, too But th know that I ll have to throw them a crumb once in a while, if want to keep my racket, while with the rest of you they would have a chance in hell So that's why, if they've got to be under whip, they d rather *I* held it, not you—you drooling, tear-jerkin mealy mouthed bastards of the public welfare! Do you think t outside of your college-bred pansies there's one village idiot who you re fooling? I m a racketeer—but I know it and my boys kn it and they know that I ll pay off Not out of the kindness of heart either, and not a cent more than I can get away with, but least they can count on that much Sure, it makes me sick som times it makes me sick right now, but it's not me who's built t kind of world—*you* did—so I m playing the game as you've set up and I m going to play it for as long as it lasts—which isn't go to be long for any of us!"

He stood up No one answered him He let his eyes move slov from face to face and stop on Wesley Mouch

"Do I get the Board, Wesley?' he asked casually

"The selection of the specific personnel is only a technical detai said Mouch pleasantly "Suppose we discuss it later, you and I?"

Everybody in the room knew that this meant the answer *Yes*

"Okay, pal," said Kinnan He went back to the window, sat do on the sill and lighted a cigarette

For some unadmitted reason, the others were looking at Dr. F ris as if seeking guidance

Don't be disturbed by oratory," said Dr Ferris smoothly "Mr
... practical reality He

...art spoke up sud
...ave to hold things
Everything will have to remain as it is Just as it is Nobody
be permitted to change anything Except—" He turned sharply
Wesley Mouch "Wesley, under Point Four, we'll have to close
...ientific foun
... They'll have

...es thats right, said Mouch. I hadnt thought of that. We'll
...e to stick in a couple of lines about that." He hunted around for
...encil and made a few scrawls on the margin of his paper

...es said Orren Boyle "Nobody should be allowed to waste
...ney on the new until everybody has plenty of the old Close all
...se damn research laboratories—and the sooner the better"
"Yes" said Wesley Mouch "We'll close them All of them"
"The State Science Institute too?" asked Fred Kinnan
"Oh, no!" said Mouch. "Thats different. Thats government Be
les... to take

...d such,
"What
... they going to do for a living, with all the other jobs and busi
...sses frozen?"
"Oh" said Wesley Mouch He scratched his head He turned to
...r Weatherby "Do we put them on relief Clem?"
"No" said Mr Weatherby "What for? Theres not enough of
...em to raise a squawk Not enough to matter"
"I suppose" said Mouch, turning to Dr Ferris "that you'll be
...ble to absorb some of them, Floyd?"
"Some," said Dr Ferris slowly as if relishing every syllable of
...s answer "Those who prove co-operative"
"What about the rest?" said Fred Kinnan.
"They'll have to wait till the Unification Board finds some use for
...em," said Wesley Mouch
"What will they eat while they're waiting?"
Mouch shrugged "There's got to be some victims in times of
...ational emergency It cant be helped"
"We have the right to do it!" cried Taggart suddenly in defiance
...o the stillness of the room "We need it We need it, dont we?"
There was no answer "We have the right to protect our livelihood!"
Nobody opposed him, but he went on with a shrill, pleading insis-
...ence. "We'll be safe for the first time in centuries Everybody will

know his place and job, and everybody else's place and job—and we won't be at the mercy of every stray crank with a new idea Nobody will push us out of business or steal our markets or undersell us or make us obsolete Nobody will come to us offering some damn new gadget and putting us on the spot to decide whether we'll lose our shirt if we buy it, or whether we'll lose our shirt if we don't but somebody else does! We won't have to decide Nobody will be permitted to decide anything It will be decided once and for all" His glance moved pleadingly from face to face "There's been enough invented already—enough for everybody's comfort—why should they be allowed to go on inventing? Why should we permit them to blast the ground from under our feet every few steps? Why should we be kept on the go in eternal uncertainty? Just because of a few restless, ambitious adventurers? Should we sacrifice the contentment of the whole of mankind to the greed of a few non-conformists? We don't need them We don't need them at all. I wish we'd get rid of that hero worship! Heroes? They've done nothing but harm, all through history They've kept mankind running a wild race, with no breathing spell, no rest, no ease, no security. Running to catch up with them . . always, without end . Just as we catch up, they're years ahead . . . They leave us no chance . They've never left us a chance. . . ." His eyes were moving restlessly, he glanced at the window, but looked hastily away he did not want to see the white obelisk in the distance "We're through with them We've won This is our age Our world We're going to have security—for the first time in centuries—for the first time since the beginning of the industrial revolution!"

"Well, this, I guess," said Fred Kinnan, "is the anti industrial revolution"

"That's a damn funny thing for you to say!" snapped Wesley Mouch "We can't be permitted to say that to the public."

"Don't worry, brother I won't say it to the public"

"It's a total fallacy," said Dr Ferris "It's a statement prompted by ignorance Every expert has conceded long ago that a planned economy achieves the maximum of productive efficiency and that centralization leads to super-industrialization"

'Centralization destroys the blight of monopoly," said Boyle

"How's that again?' drawled Kinnan.

[illegible] answered earnestly

ratizatio

! Now, fo

. . . shortag

of iron ore, is there any sense in my wasting money, labor an national resources on making old fashioned steel, when there exist a much better metal that I could be making? A metal that every body wants, but nobody can get. Now is that good economics or sound social efficiency or democratic justice? Why shouldn't I be allowed to manufacture that metal and why shouldn't the people get it when they need it? Just because of the private monopoly of one selfish individual? Should we sacrifice our rights to his person

"Skip it, brother," said Fred Kinnan. "I've read it all in the same *ewspapers you did* "

"I dont like your attitude," said Boyle, in a sudden tone of right-ousness, with a look which, in a barroom, would have signified a relude to a fist fight He sat up *straight*, buttressed by the columns f paragraphs on yellow tinged paper, which he was seeing in his iind

"At a time of crucial public need, are we to waste social effort on the manufacture of obsolete products? Are we to let the many remain in want while the few withhold from us the better products and methods available? Are we to be stopped by the superstition of patent rights?"

"Is it not obvious that private industry is unable to cope with the present economic crisis? How long, for instance, are we going to put up with the disgraceful shortage of Rearden Metal? There is a crying public demand for it, which Rearden has failed to supply "

"*When are we going to put an end to economic injustice* and special privileges? Why should Rearden be the only one permitted to manufacture Rearden Metal?'

"I dont like your *attitude*," *said Orren Boyle* 'So long as we respect the rights of the workers, we'll want you to respect the rights of the industrialists "

"Which rights of which industrialists?" drawled Kinnan

"I'm inclined to think," said Dr Ferris hastily, 'that Point Two, perhaps, is the most essential one of all at present We must put an end to that peculiar business of industrialists retiring and vanishing *We must* stop them It's playing havoc with our entire economy "

"Why are they doing it?" asked Taggart nervously "Where are they all going?"

"Nobody knows " said Dr Ferris "We've been unable to find any information or explanation. But it must be stopped In times of crisis, economic service to the nation is just as much of a duty as military service *Anyone who abandons it should be regarded as a* deserter I have recommended that we introduce the death penalty for those men but Wesley wouldn t agree to it '

"Take it easy, boy," said Fred Kinnan in an odd, slow voice He sat suddenly and perfectly still, his arms crossed looking at Ferris in a manner that made it suddenly real to the room that Ferris had proposed murder "Don't let me hear you talk about any death penal ...

... "We don't
w ... side Our
w problem is, will they will they accept it at all?

"They will " said Dr Ferris

"I'm a little worried " sa d E ... on "abo t Po nts Three
and F ...
indust ...
That s ...

spiritual issue Doesn't Point Four mean that no new books are to be written or published from now on?"

"Yes,' said Mouch, "it does But we can't make an exception for the book publishing business It's an industry like any other When we say 'no new products,' it s got to mean 'no new products'"

'But this is a matter of the spirit," said Lawson, his voice had a tone, not of rational respect, but of superstitious awe

'We re not interfering with anybody s spirit. But when you print a book on paper, it becomes a material commodity—and if we ... hold th

'Don t be a chump, Gene" said Dr Ferris "You don t want som recalcitrant hacks to come out with treatises that will wreck our en tire program, do you? If you breathe the word 'censorship' now they'll all scream bloody murder They're not ready for it—as yet But if you leave the spirit alone and make it a simple material issu —not a matter of ideas, but just a matter of paper, ink and printin presses—you accomplish your purpose much more smoothly You'l make sure that nothing dangerous gets printed or heard—and no body is going to fight over a material issue"

"Yes, but but I don t think the writers will like it."

"Are you sure?' asked Wesley Mouch, with a glance that wa almost a smile "Don t forget that under Point Five the publishers will have to publish as many books as they did in the Basic Year Since there will be no new ones, they will have to reprint—and the public will have to buy—some of the old ones There are many very worthy books that have never had a fair chance"

"Oh," said Lawson he remembered that he had seen Mouch lunching with Balph Eubank two weeks ago Then he shook his head and frowned "Still, I m worried The intellectuals are our friends We don t want to lose them. They can make an awful lot of trouble"

"They won t," said Fred Kinnan. "Your kind of intellectuals are the first to scream when it's safe—and the first to shut their traps at the first sign of danger They spend years spitting at the man who feeds them—and they lick the hand of the man who slaps their drooling faces Didn't they deliver every country of Europe, one of ... one here? Didn't

the slave camps the fourteen hour workday and the mortality in scurvy in the People s States of Europe? No, but you do hear them telling the whip beaten wretches that starvation is prosperity, that slavery is freedom, that torture chambers are brother love and that if the wretches don t understand it, then it s their own fault that they suffer, and it s the mangled corpses in the jail cellars who're to blame for all their troubles, not the benevolent leaders! Intellectuals? might have to worry about any other breed of men, but not

about the modern intellectuals they'll swallow anything I don t
I so safe about the lousiest wharf rat in the longshoremen's
ion he's liable to remember suddenly that he is a man—and then
von t be able to keep him in line But the intellectuals? That's the
e thing they've forgotten long ago I guess it's the one thing that
their education was aimed to make them forget Do anything
u please to the intellectuals They'll take it"

"For once" said Dr Ferris "I agree with Mr Kinnan. I agree
th his facts if not with his feelings You don t have to worry
out the intellectuals, Wesley Just put a few of them on the gov-
nment payroll and send them out to preach precisely the sort of
ing Mr Kinnan mentioned that the blame rests on the victims
ive them moderately comfortable salaries and extremely loud
les—and they'll forget their copyrights and do a better job for

actually have
of clauses in
most, but not
would have a
very good chance to beat us And we have to preserve a semblance
of legality—or the populace won t take it."

"Precisely," said Dr Ferris "It s extremely important to get those
patents turned over to us *voluntarily* Even if we had a law per-

about its being a patriotic duty and that anyone who refuses is a
prince of greed and they'll sign But—" He stopped

"I know," said Mouch he was growing visibly more nervous
"There will be, I think, a few old fashioned bastards here and there
who'll refuse to sign—but they won't be prominent enough to make
a noise nobody will hear about it, their own communities and
friends will turn against them for their being selfish so it won't give
us any trouble We ll just take the patents over, anyway—and those
guys won't have the nerve or the money to start a test case. But—"
He stopped.

James Taggart leaned back in his chair, watching them, he was
beginning to enjoy the conversation

things which must not be said—and he is not afraid to say them He knows the one dangerous, fatally dangerous weapon. He is our deadliest adversary

Who? asked Lawson

Dr Ferris hesitated shrugged and answered "The guiltless man"

Lawson stared blankly What do you mean and whom are you talking about?

James Taggart smiled

"I mean that there is no way to disarm any man" said Dr Ferris, except through guilt Through that which he himself has accepted as guilt If a man has ever stolen a dime you can impose on him the punishment intended for a bank robber and he will take it. He'll bear any form of misery he'll feel that he deserves no better If there s not enough gu lt in the world we must create it If we teach a man that it s evil to look at spring flowers and he believes us and then does it—we ll be able to do whatever we please with him. He won t defend himself He won t feel he s worth it He won t fight. But save us from the man who lives up to his own standards Save us from the man of clean conscience He s the man who'll beat us"

Are you talking about Henry Rearden? asked Taggart, his voice peculiarly clear

The one name they had not wanted to pronounce struck them into an instant s silence

What if I were? asked Dr Ferris cautiously

Oh nothing said Taggart Only if you were I would tell you that I can deliver Henry Rearden He'll sign"

By the rules of their unspoken language they all knew—from the tone of his voice—that he was not bluffing

"God J m! No! gasped Wesley Mouch

"Yes said Taggart I was stunned too when I learned—what I learned I didn t expect that Anything but that"

I am glad to hear it said Mouch cautiously "It s a constructive piece of information It might be very valuable indeed"

Valuable—yes said Taggart pleasantly "When do you plan to put the directive into effect?"

"Oh we have to move fast. We don t want any news of it to leak out I expect you all to keep this most strictly confidential I'd say that we'll be ready to spring it on them in a couple of weeks"

"Don t you think it would be advisable—before all prices are frozen—to adjust the matter of the railroad rates? I was thinking of a raise A small but most essentially needed raise"

"We'll discuss it you and I" said Mouch amiably "It might be arranged" He t[illegible] was tagging. "There [illegible] pro- [illegible] the [illegible] nost [illegible] ork, [illegible] ac-

tion We ll just keep on trying If any hardships come up remember that it s only temporary Only for the duration of the national [illegible]"

'Say," asked Kinnan, "how is the emergency to end if everything :o stand still?

'Don't be theoretical," said Mouch impatiently. "We've got to al with the situation of the moment. Don t bother about minor tails so long as the broad outlines of our policy are clear We'll ve the power We'll be able to solve any problem and answer any estion."

Fred Kinnan chuckled. "Who is John Galt?"

"Don t say that!" cried Taggart.

"I have a question to ask about Point Seven," said Kinnan. "It ys that all ...

louch. "What about it?"

"Nothing" said Kinnan. "I just asked"

Mouch leaned back in his chair "I must say to all of you that appreciate your coming here and giving us the benefit of your pinions It has been very helpful.' He leaned forward to look at is desk calendar and sat over it for a moment, toying with his encil Then the pencil came down struck a date and drew a circle round it. "Directive 10 289 will go into effect on the morning of May first."

All nodded approval None looked at his neighbor

James Taggart rose, walked to the window and pulled the blind lown over the white obelisk

In the first ...

...yond the window ... she remembered was that she had c...

when

Sh...

The lighted lamp on the desk looked futile in the glow of the morning over the piles of paper which were her cheerless unfinished task She tried not to think of the work for a few minutes longer, while she dragged herself past the desk to her washroom and let handfuls of cold water run over her face

The exhaustion was gone by the time she stepped back into the office. No matter what night preceded it, she had never known a morning when she ... ment that be-can

mu

her

ma

an

that would take form in the activity about to pour through them. The calendar in the distance said May 1.

She sat down at her desk, smiling in defiance at the distastefulness of her job She hated the reports that she had to finish reading, but it was her job, it was her railroad, it was morning She lighted a cigarette, thinking that she would finish this task before breakfast, she turned off the lamp and pulled the papers forward

There were reports from the general managers of the four Regions of the Taggart system, their pages a typewritten cry of despair over [illegible]

all those calculations had been made on the assumption that the volume of freight would remain unchanged and that the raise would bring them added revenue by the end of the year, she knew that the freight tonnage would go on shrinking, that the raise would make little difference that by the end of this year their losses would be greater than ever

When she looked up from the pages, she saw with a small jolt of astonishment that the clock said 9 25 She had been dimly aware of the usual sound of movement and voices in the anteroom of her office, as her staff had arrived to begin their day; she wondered why nobody had entered her office and why her telephone had remained silent, as a daily rule, there should have been a rush of business by this hour She glanced at her calendar, there was a note that the McNeil Car Foundry of Chicago was to phone her at nine A M in regard to the new freight cars which Taggart Transcontinental had [illegible]

[illegible] call her [illegible] , "Miss

"I slept here last night, again Didn't intend to, but did Was there a call for me from the McNeil Car Foundry?"

"No, Miss Taggart "

"Put them through to me immediately, when they call "

"Yes, Miss Taggart "

Switching the communicator off, she wondered whether she imagined it or whether there had been something strange in the girl s voice it had sounded unnaturally tense

She felt the faint light headedness of hunger and thought that she [illegible]

[illegible] of incredulous anger—that he had stopped work in the mountain section of Winston, Colorado He recommended a change of [illegible]ns he suggested that the rail intended for Winston be used, in-

ead, to repair the track of their Washington-to-Miami branch. He ve his reasons a derailment had occurred on that branch last ek, and Mr Tinky Holloway of Washington, traveling with a rty of friends, had been delayed for three hours, it had been ported to the chief engineer that Mr Holloway had expressed

rned a much more important class of passenger traffic, therefore, e chief engineer suggested that Winston could be kept waiting a tle longer

ges, thinking that her first duty of the day, ahead of any other, as to stop this particular piece of insanity

The telephone rang

"Yes?" she asked, snatching the receiver "McNeil Car Foundry?"

"No," said the voice of her secretary "Señor Francisco d Anconia."

She looked at the phone's mouthpiece for the instant of a brief ock. "All right. Put him on"

The next voice she heard was Francisco s "I see that you re in our office just the same," he said, his voice was mocking, harsh and ense.

"Where did you expect me to be?"

"How do you like the new suspension?"

"What suspension?"

"The moratorium on brains"

"What are you talking about?"

"Haven t you seen today's newspapers?"

"No"

There was a pause then his voice came slowly changed and grave "Better take a look at them Dagny"

"All right."

"I'll call you later"

She hung up and pressed the switch of the communicator on her desk. "Get me a newspaper," she said to her secretary

"Yes Miss Taggart," the secretary s voice answered grimly

It was Eddie Willers who came in and put the newspaper down on her desk. The meaning of the look on his face was the same as the tone she had caught in Francisco s voice the advance notice of some inconceivable disaster

"None of us wanted to be first to tell you," he said very quietly and walked out.

When she rose from her desk, a few moments later she felt that she had full control of her head not aware of her body

she st

clant

around her, but she knew that she would be able to see the thread of a cobweb if her purpose required it, just as she would be able to walk with a somnambulist's assurance along the edge of a roof She could not know that she was looking at the room with the eyes of a person who had lost the capacity and the concept of doubt, and what remained to her was the simplicity of a single perception and of a single goal She did not know that the thing which seemed so violent, yet felt like such a still, unfamiliar calm within her, was the power of full certainty—and that the anger shaking her body, the anger which made her ready, with the same passionate indifference, either to kill or to die was her love of rectitude, the only love to which all the years of her life had been given

Holding the newspaper in her hand, she walked out of her office and on toward the hall She knew, crossing the anteroom that the faces of her staff were turned to her, but they seemed to be many years away

She walked down the hall, moving swiftly but without effort with the same sensation of knowing that her feet were probably touching the ground but that she did not feel it She did not know how many rooms she crossed to reach Jim s office, or whether there had been any people in her way she kne [illegible] the d[illegible] to take and the door to pull open to er [illegible]

The newspaper [illegible]
him She threw it [illegible]
the carpet

'There s my resignation Jim " she said 'I won't work as a slave or as a slave-driver

She did not hear the sound of his gasp, it came with the sound of the door closing after her

She went back to her office and, crossing the anteroom, signaled Eddie to follow her inside

She said her voice calm and clear, "I have resigned."

He nodded silently

"I don t know as yet what I'll do in the future I m going away, to think it over and to decide If you want to follow me, I'll be at the lodge in Woodstock " It was an old hunting cabin in a forest of the Berkshire Mountains which she had inherited from her father and had not visited for years

'I want to follow he whispered, "I want to quit, and . . . and I can't I can t make myself do it "

"Then will you do me a favor?"

"Of course "

"Don t communicate with me about the railroad I don't want to hear it Don t tell anyone where I am except Hank Rearden If he asks tell him about the cabin and how to get there But no one else I don't want to see anybody "

"All right "

"Promise?"

"Of course "

"When I decide what's to become of me, I'll let you know "

wait "

"That's all, Eddie."

He knew that every word was measured and that nothing else could be said between them at this moment. He inclined his head, letting it say the rest, then walked out of the office

She saw the chief engineer's report still lying open on her desk, and thought that she had to order him at once to resume work on the Winston section, then remembered that it was not her problem any longer She felt no pain. She knew that the pain would come later and that it would be a tearing agony of pain, and that the [illegible]

Pennsylvania.

[illegible]

"I see." He sounded as if he had expected it.

[illegible]

"No I have two weeks in which they expect me to sign their Gift Certificate. I want to be right here when the two weeks expire."

"Do you need me—for the two weeks?"

"No It's worse for you than for me You have no way to fight them. I have. I think I'm glad they did it. It's clear and final Don't worry about me. Rest. Rest from all of it, first."

"Yes"

"Where are you going?"

"To the country To a cabin I own in the Berkshires If you want to see me, Eddie Willers will tell you the way to get there. I'll be back in two weeks"

"Will you do me a favor?"

"Yes."

"Don't come back until I come for you"

"But I want to be here, when it happens"

"Leave that up to me"

"Whatever they do to you, I want it done to me also"

"Leave it up to me Dearest, don't you understand? I think that what I want most right now is what you want not to see any of them. But I have to stay here for a while So it will help me if I know that you, at least, are out of their reach I want to keep one clean point in my mind, to lean against. It will be only a short while—and then [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] king ahead, her steps advancing with the unbroken, unhurried rhythm of

finality Her face was held level and it had a look of astonishment of acceptance, of repose

She walked across the concourse of the Terminal She saw the statue of Nathaniel Taggart But she felt no pain from it and no reproach, only the rising fullness of her love, only the feeling that she was going to join him, not in death, but in that which had been his life

* *

The first man to quit at Rearden Steel was Tom Colby, rolling mill foreman, head of the Rearden Steel Workers Union For ten years he had heard himself denounced throughout the country, because his was a company union" and because he had never engaged in a violent conflict with the management This was true no conflict had ever been necessary, Rearden paid a higher wage scale than any union scale in the country, for which he demanded—and got—the best labor force to be found anywhere

When Tom Colby told him that he was quitting Rearden nodded, without comment or questions

'I won t work under these conditions, myself," Colby added quietly, "and I won t help to keep the men working They trust me. I won t be the Judas goat leading them to the stockyards"

"What are you going to do for a living?' asked Rearden.

"I ve saved enough to last me for about a year"

"And after that?'

Colby shrugged

Rearden thought of the boy with the angry eyes, who mined coal at night as a criminal He thought of all the dark roads the alleys, the back yards of the country where the best of the country s men would now exchange their services in jungle barter, in chance jobs, in unrecorded transactions He thought of the end of that road

Tom Colby seemed to know what he was thinking "You re on your way to end up right alongside of me, Mr Rearden," he said. "Are you going to sign your brains over to them?"

"No"

"And after that?"

[illegible] eyes in a [illegible] ve been [illegible] n But it [illegible]

[illegible] office as if sensing [illegible] d to [illegible] him [illegible] the [illegible] ness

the boy s face

Rearden" he said "I wanted to tell you that if you want to ten times the quota of Rearden Metal or steel or pig iron or

thing, and bootleg it all over the place to anybody at any
e—I wanted to tell you to go ahead I'll fix it up I'll juggle the
ks, I'll fake the reports, I'll get phony witnesses, I'll forge affi-
its, I'll commit perjury—so you don't have to worry, there
't be any trouble!"

Now why do you want to do that?" asked Rearden, smiling, but
smile vanished when he heard the boy answer earnestly

Because I want, for once, to do something moral"

That's not the way to be moral—" Rearden started, and stopped
uptly, realizing that it *was* the way, the only way left, realizing
ough how many twists of intellectual corruption upon corruption
boy had to struggle toward his momentous discovery

hly "I know it's
int I meant—"
"Mr Rearden,

'Take Rearden Metal away from you"

Rearden smiled and, prompted by a desperate pity, said "Forget
Non Absolute. There are no rights"

"I know there aren't. But I mean . . . what I mean is that they
n't do it"

"Why not?" He could not help smiling

"Mr Rearden, don't sign the Gift Certificate! Don't sign it, on
inciple"

"I won't sign it. But there aren't any principles"

"I know there aren't" He was reciting it in full earnestness, with
e honesty of a conscientious student "I know that everything is
lative and that nobody can know anything and that reason is an
usion and that there isn't any reality But I'm just talking about
earden Metal Don't sign, Mr Rearden Morals or no morals,
inciples or no principles, just don't sign it—because it isn't right!"

No one else mentioned the directive in Rearden's presence Silence
as the new aspect about the mills The men did not speak to him
hen he appeared in the workshops, and he noticed that they did
ot speak to one another The personnel office received no formal
signations But every other morning one or two men failed to
ppear and never appeared again Inquiries at their homes found
e homes abandoned and the men gone The personnel office did
ot report these desertions, as the directive required, instead, Rear-
en began to see unfamiliar faces among the workers, the drawn,
eaten faces of the long-unemployed, and heard them addressed by
he names of the men who had quit He asked no questions

There was silence throughout the country He did not know how
nany ... vanished on May 1 and 2, leav
own custom-
Chicago He
eared in the
suddenly full
of stories about spring floods, traffic accidents, school picnics
golden wedding

There was silence in his own home Lillian had departed on a vacation trip to Florida in mid April it had astonished him, as an inexplicable whim, it was the first trip she had taken alone since their marriage Philip avoided him, with a look of panic His mother stared at Rearden in reproachful bewilderment, she said nothing but she kept bursting into tears in his presence, her manner suggesting that her tears were the most important aspect to consider in whatever disaster it was that she sensed approaching

On the morning of May 15 he sat at the desk in his office, abo

vel o i and ght float ng sp rals of i ii e—dllu w

spite of its rigid formality her tone conveyed the question " I throw him out?

r Rearden's fac at pa esk that the obvio invitation acted as office h

Rearden sat watching him in patient silence

"Since the deadline for the signing of the national Gift Certifica expires tonight at midnight," said Dr Ferris in the tone of a sal man extending a special courtesy to a customer, "I have come obtain your signature Mr Rearden"

He paused with an air of suggesting that the formula now cal for an answer

Go on" said Rearden 'I am listening"

"Yes I suppose I should explain,' said Dr Ferris "that we wish get your signature early in the day in order to announce the on a national news broadcast Although the gift program has g through quite smoothly there are still a few stubborn individual left who have failed to sign—small fry, really, whose patents are no crucial value but we cannot let them remain unbound, a matter of principle you understand They are we believe wai to follow your lead You have a great popular following Mr R den much greater than you suspected or knew how to use Th fore the announcement that you have signed will remove the hopes of resistance and by midnight, will bring in the thus completing the program on schedule"

Rearden knew that of all possible speeches this was the last

Ferris would make if any doubt of his surrender remained in the man's mind

"Go on," said Rearden evenly "You haven't finished."

"You know—as you have demonstrated at your trial—how important it is, and why, that we obtain all that property with the voluntary consent of the victims" Dr. Ferris opened his briefcase "Here is the Gift Certificate, Mr Rearden. We have filled it out and all you have to do is to sign your name at the bottom"

The piece of paper, which he placed in front of Rearden, looked like a small college diploma, with the text printed in old fashioned script and the particulars inserted by typewriter The thing stated that he, Henry Rearden, hereby transferred to the nation all rights to the metal alloy now known as "Rearden Metal, which would henceforth be manufactured by all who so desired, and which would bear the name of "Miracle Metal," chosen by the representatives of the people Glancing at the paper, Rearden wondered whether it was a deliberate mockery of decency, or so low an estimate of their victims' intelligence, that had made the designers of this paper print the text across a faint drawing of the Statue of Liberty

His eyes moved slowly to Dr Ferris' face "You would not have come here," he said, "unless you had some extraordinary kind of

to understand

" He opened

ave brought a few samples."

In the manner of a cardsharp whisking out a long fan of cards with one snap of the hand, he spread before Rearden a line of glossy photographic prints They were photostats of hotel and auto court registers, bearing in Rearden's handwriting the names of Mr and Mrs J Smith.

"You know, of course," said Dr Ferris softly, "but you might wish to see whether we know it, that Mrs J Smith is Miss Dagny Taggart"

ruby pendant "You wouldn't care to see the sworn statements of apartment house doormen and night clerks—they contain nothing that would be new to you, except the number of witnesses who know where you spent your nights in New York for about the last two years. Y

"I know it," said Rearden. His voice conveyed no reaction. The [illegible]

[illegible] harm you [illegible] of personal [illegible] telling you frankly that this will not hurt you at all. It will only hurt Miss Taggart."

Rearden was looking straight at him now, but Dr. Ferris wondered why it seemed to him that the calm, closed face was moving away into a greater and greater distance.

"If this affair of yours is spread from one end of the country to the other," said Dr. Ferris, "by such experts in the art of smearing as Bertram Scudder, it will do no actual damage to *your* reputation. Beyond a few glances of curiosity and a few raised eyebrows in a few of the stuffier drawing rooms, you will get off quite easily. Affairs of this sort are expected of a man. In fact, it will enhance your reputation. It will give you an aura of romantic glamor among the women and, among the men, it will give you a certain kind of prestige in the nature of envy for an unusual conquest. But what it will do to Miss Taggart—with her spotless name, her reputation for being above scandal, her peculiar position of a woman in a strictly masculine business—what it will do to her, what she will se[e] in the eyes of everyone she meets, what she will hear from ever[y] man she deals with—I will leave that up to your own mind t[o] imagine. And to consider."

Rearden felt nothing but a great stillness and a *great clarity*. [It] was as if some voice were telling him sternly: This is the time—the scene is lighted—now look. And standing naked in the gre[at] light, he was looking quietly, solemnly, stripped of fear, of pain, [of] hope, with nothing left to him but the desire to know.

Dr. Ferris was astonished to hear him say slowly, in the dispa[s]sionate tone of an abstract statement that did not seem to be a[d]dressed to his listener, "But all your calculations rest on the fa[ct] that Miss Taggart is a virtuous woman, not the slut you're going [to] call her."

"Yes, of course," said Dr. Ferris.

"And that this means much more to me than a casual affair."

"Of course."

"*If she and I were the kind of scum you're going to* make us a[p]pear, your blackjack wouldn't work."

"No, it wouldn't."

"If our relationship were the depravity you're going to proclai[m] it to be, you'd have no way to harm us."

"No."

"We'd be outside your power."

"Actually—yes."

It was not to Dr. Ferris that Rearden was speaking. He was see[ing] a long line of men stretched through the centuries from Plato [on]ward, whose heir and final product was an incompetent little p[ro]fessor with the appearance of a gigolo and the soul of a thug.

"I offered you, once, a chance to join us," said Dr. Ferris. "Y

sed. Now you can see the consequences How a man of your ligence thought that he could win by playing it straight, I can't gine"

But if I had joined you," said Rearden, with the same detachment, as if he were not speaking about himself, "what would I have ad worth looting from Orren Boyle?"

Oh hell, there's always enough suckers to expropriate in the ld!"

[illegible] What? As I?"

ening any longer He was seeing the pendulous face of Orren yle with the small slits of pig's eyes, the doughy face of Mr owen with the eyes that scurried away from any speaker and any t—he was seeing them go through the jerky motions of an ape rforming a routine it had learned to copy by muscular habit, rforming it in order to manufacture Rearden Metal, with no owledge and no capacity to know what had taken place in the perimental laboratory of Rearden Steel through ten years of ssionate devotion to an excruciating effort It was proper that ey should now call it "Miracle Metal"—a miracle was the only ame *they* could give to those ten years and to that faculty from hich Rearden Metal was born—a miracle was all that the Metal ould be in their eyes, the product of an unknown, unknowable ause, an object in nature, not to be explained but to be seized, like stone or a weed, theirs for the seizing— are we to let the many emain in want while the few withhold from us the better products nd methods available?"

If I had not known that my life depends on my mind and my effort—he was saying soundlessly to the line of men stretched through the centuries—if I had not made it my highest moral purpose to exercise the best of my effort and the fullest capacity of my mind in order to support and expand my life you would have found nothing to loot from me, nothing to support your own existence. It is not my sins that you're using to injure me, but my virtues —my virtues by your own acknowledgment, since your own life depends on them, since you need them, since you do not seek to destroy my achievement but to seize it

He remembered the voice of the gigolo of science saying to him "We're after power and we mean it You fellows were pikers but we know the real trick" We were not after power—he said to the gigolo's ancestors in-spirit—and we did not live by means of that which we condemned We regarded productive ability as virtue—and we let the degree of his virtue be the measure of a man's reward. We drew no advantage from the things we regarded as evil—we did not require the existence of bank robbers in order to operate our banks or of burglars in order to provide for our homes, or of murderers in order to protect our lives But you need the products of a man's ability—yet you proclaim that productive is a selfish evil and you turn the degree of a man's pr

into the measure of his loss We lived by that which we held to be good and punished that which we held to be evil You live by that which you denounce as evil and punish that which you know to be good

He remembered the formula of the punishment that Lillian had sough
monst
a syst
was the puni
fuel to make
as the cause c
their feeling f
blackmail from which the depraved would be immune—and, in the People's States of Europe, millions of men being held in bondage by means of their desire to live, by means of their energy drained in forced labor, by means of their ability to feed their masters, by means of the hostage system, of their love for their children or wives or friends—by means of love, ability and pleasure as the fodder for threats and the bait for extortion, with love tied to fear ability to punishment, ambition to confiscation with blackmail as law, with escape from pain, not quest for pleasure, as the only incentive to effort and the only reward of achievement—men held enslaved by means of whatever living power they possessed and of whatever joy they found in life Such was the code that the world

became the agents of its destruction, so that one's best became the tool of one's agony, and man's life on earth became impractical

"Yours was the code of life," said the voice of a man whom he could not forget "What, then, is theirs?"

Why had the world accepted it?—he thought How had the victim come to sanction a code that pronounced them guilty of the fact of existing? . . . And then the violence of an inner blow became the total stillness of his body as he sat looking at a sudden vision Hadn't he done it also? Hadn't he given his sanction to the code of self-damnation? Dagny—he thought—and the depth of their feeling for each other . the blackmail from which the depraved would be immune . . . hadn t he, too, once called it depravity? Hadn't he been first to throw at her all the insults which the human scum was now threatening to throw at her in public? Hadn t he accepted as guilt the highest happiness he had ever found?

"You who won't allow one per cent of impurity into an alloy of metal," the unforgotten voice was saying to him, "what have you allowed into your moral code?"

"Well, Mr Rearden?" said the voice of Dr Ferris "Do you understand me now? Do we get the Metal or do we make a public showplace out of Miss Taggart's bedroom?"

He was not seeing Dr Ferris He was seeing—in the violent cla that was like a spotlight tearing every riddle open to him—t

y he met Dagny for the first time

It was a few months after she had become Vice President of Tag rt Transcontinental He had been hearing skeptically, for some ne the rumors that the railroad was run by Jim Taggart's sister

aggart Trans

lephoned her

it that same

would be at

ie construction site of the new cutoff, that afternoon at Milford tation between New York and Philadelphia, but would be glad to ee him there if he wished He went to the appointment resentfully, ie did not like such businesswomen as he had met and he felt that ailroads were no business for a woman to play with he expected spoiled heiress who used her name and sex as substitute for

like the lady

he platform of

the station There was a clutter of sidings freight cars cranes and steam shovels around him descending from the main track down the slope of a ravine where men were grading the roadbed of the new cutoff

on a flatcar

trands of dis

ordered hair stirring in the wind Her plain gray suit was like a thin coating of metal over a slender body against the spread of sun flooded space and sky Her posture had the lightness and unself conscious precision of an arrogantly pure self-confidence She was watching the work her glance intent and purposeful the glance of competence enjoying its own function She looked as if this were her place her moment and her world she looked as if enjoyment were her

of an active

mouth she

nent ready to

If he asked himself a moment earlier whether he carried in his mind an image of what he wanted a woman to look like he would have answered that he did not yet seeing her he knew that this was the image and that it had been for years But he was not looking at her as at a woman He had forgotten where he was and on what errand, he was held by a child's sensation of joy in the immediate

me upon a

for its own

would have

s the sheer

looked at a statue or a landscape and what he pleasure of the sight, the purest esthetic pleasure he had ever perienced.

He saw a switchman going by and he asked, pointing, "Who that?"

"Dagny Taggart," said the man, walking on

Rearden felt as if the words struck him inside his throat. He f the start of a current that cut his breath for a moment, then we slowly down his body, carrying in its wake a sense of weight, drained heaviness that left him no capacity but one He was aware with an abnormal clarity—of the place, the woman s name, a everything it implied but all of it had receded into some ou ring and had become a pressure that left him alone in the cent as the ring s meaning and essence—and his only reality was t desire to have this woman, now, here, on top of the flatcar in t open sun—to have her before a word was spoken between them, the first act of their meeting because it would say everything a because they had earned it long ago

She turned her head In the slow curve of the movement, her ey came to his and stopped He felt certain that she saw the nature his glance that she was held by it yet did not name it to herse Her ... he stoo

... ealit ... ach

that which no man may feel fully and survive a sense of self hatr —the more terrible because some part of him refused to accept and made him feel guiltier It was not a progression of words b the instantaneous verdict of an emotion, a verdict that told him Th... shamef

He did not know how long he stood there or what dem... that span of time left within him All that he could preserve was th will to decide that she must never know it

He waited until she had descended to the ground and the ma with the notes had departed then he approached her and said coldly

"Miss Taggart? I am Henry Rearden"

"Oh!" It was just a small break, then he heard the quietly natur "How do you do, Mr Rearden"

He knew, not admitting it to himself, that the break came fro some faint equivalent of his own feeling she was glad that a fac she had liked belonged to a man she could admire When he pro ceeded to speak to her about business, his manner was more harshl abrupt than it had ever been with any of his masculine customers.

Now, looking from the memory of the girl on the flatcar to th Gift Certificate lying on his desk, he felt as if the two met in single shock, fusing all the days and doubts he had lived betwee them, and, by the glare of the explosion, in a moment s vision of final sum, he saw the answer to all his questions

He thought Guilty?—guiltier than I had known, far guiltier tha

I had thought, that day—guilty of the evil of damning as guilt that which was my best. I damned the fact that my mind and body were a unit, and that my body responded to the values of my mind. I damned the fact that joy is the core of existence, the motive power of every living being, that it is the need of one's body as it is the goal of one's spirit, that my body was not a weight of inanimate muscles, but an instrument able to give me an experience of superlative joy to unite my flesh and my spirit. That capacity, which I damned as shameful, had left me indifferent to sluts, but gave me my one desire in answer to a woman's greatness. That desire, which I damned as obscene, did not come from the sight of her body, but from the knowledge that the lovely form I saw, did express the spirit I was seeing—it was not her body that I wanted, but her person—it was not the girl in gray that I had to possess, but the woman who ran a railroad.

But I damned my body's capacity to express what I felt, I damned, as an affront to her, the highest tribute I could give her—just as they damn my ability to translate the work of my mind into Rearden Metal, just as they damn me for the power to transform matter to serve my needs. I accepted their code and believed, as they taught me, that the

inferior animals.

I broke their code, but I fell into the trap they intended, the trap of a code devised to be broken. I took no pride in my rebellion, I took it as guilt, I did not damn them, I damned myself, I did not damn their code, I damned existence—and I hid my happiness as a shameful secret. I should have lived it openly, as of our right—or made her my wife, as in truth she was. But I branded my happiness as evil and made her bear it as a disgrace. What they want to do to her now, I did it first. I made it possible.

I did it—in the name of pity for the most contemptible woman I know. That, too, was their code, and I accepted it. I believed that one person owes a duty to another with no payment for it in return. I believed that it was my duty to love a woman who gave me nothing, who betrayed everything I lived for, who demanded her happiness at the price of mine. I believed that love is some static gift which, once granted, need no longer be deserved—just as they believe that wealth is a static possesion which can be seized and held without further effort. I believed that love is a gratuity, not a rewar

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on m

self-t

core

"By every standard of mine, to maintain our marriage

vicious f

yours, I

Here they are, lying on my desk, those standards I accepted with out understanding, here is the manner of her love for me, that lov which I never believed, but tried to spare Here is the final produc of the unearned I thought that it was proper to commit injustice so long as I would be the only one to suffer. But nothing can justif injustice And this is the punishment for accepting as proper tha hideous evil which is self immolation I thought that I would be th only victim Instead, I've sacrificed the noblest woman to the viles! When one acts on pity against justice, it is the good whom on punishes for the sake of the evil; when one saves the guilty fron suffering, it is the innocent whom one forces to suffer There is n escape from justice nothing can be unearned and unpaid for in th universe, neither in matter nor in spirit—and if the guilty do not pay then the innocent have to pay it

It was not the cheap little looters of wealth who have beaten me—it was I They did not disarm me—I threw away my weapon. This i a battle that cannot be fought except with clean hands—because th enemy's sole power is in the sores of one's conscience—and I ac cepted a code that made me regard the strength of my hands as sin and a stain

"Do we get the Metal, Mr Rearden?"

He looked from the Gift Certificate on his desk to the memor of the girl on the flatcar He asked himself whether he could delive the radiant being he had seen in that moment, to the looters of th mind and the thugs of the press Could he continue to let the in nocent bear punishment? Could he let her take the stand *he* shoulc have taken? Could he now defy the enemy's code, when the dis grace would be hers not his—when the muck would be thrown a her, not at him—when she would have to fight, while he'd b spared? Could he let her existence be turned into a hell he woulc have no way of sharing?

He sat still, looking up at her I love you, he said to the girl or the flatcar, silently pronouncing the words that had been the mean ing of that moment four years ago, feeling the solemn happines that belonged with the words, even though this was how he had tc say it to her for the first time

He looked down at the Gift Certificate Dagny, he thought, you would not let me do it if you knew, you will hate me for it if you learn—but I cannot let you pay my debts The fault was mine and I will not shift to you the punishment which is mine to take Even if I have nothing else now [illegible] that I see the truth, that I am free [illegible] my own eyes, that I [illegible] time—and that I will [illegible] *my* code which I have never broken to be a man who pays his own way

I love you, he said to the girl on the flatcar, feeling as if the light of that summer's sun were touching his forehead, as if he, too, were standing under an open sky over an unobstructed earth, with nothing left to him except himself.

"Well, Mr Rearden? Are you going to sign?" asked Dr. Ferris

the desk.

Chapter VII THE MORATORIUM ON BRAINS

"Where have you been all this time?" Eddie Willers asked the worker in the underground cafeteria, and added, with a smile that was an

them and no food to feed them in jail, so nobody gives a damn any more, one way or another I hear the deserters are just wandering about, doing odd jobs or worse—who's got any odd jobs to offer these days? . . . It's our best men that we're losing, the kind who've been with the company for twenty years or more Why did they have to chain them to their jobs? Those men never intended to quit—but now the disagreement, just

y or night,
out of bed
should see
ncies Some

human driftwood we're getting of them mean well, but they're scared of their own shadows Others are the kind of scum I didn't think existed—they get the jobs and they know that we can't throw them out once they're in, so they

at insanity is
hat's real now is in-
to lose my mind,
p telling myself that

I go on working I keep waiting for her to come this is Taggart Transcontinental. I keep waiting for her to come back—for the door to open at any moment and—oh God, I'm not supposed to say that! . . . What? You knew it? You knew she's gone? . . . They're keeping it secret. But I guess supposed to say it They're telling pe knows it, only

that she s away on a leave of absence She s still listed as our Vice-President in Charge of Operation I think Jim and I are the only ones who know that she has resigned for good Jim is scared to death that his friends in Washington will take it out on him if it becomes known that she s quit It s supposed to be disastrous for public mo ... and Jim doesn't want them

to

tha

wh

in Taggart Transcontinental if they learn that she s gone Confidence You d think that it wouldn t matter now since there s nothing any of them can do about it And yet Jim knows that we have to preserve some semblance of the greatness that Taggart Transcontinental once stood for And he knows that the last of it went with her No they don t know where she is Yes I do but I won't tell them I m the only one who knows Oh yes they've been trying to find out They ve tried to pump me in every way they could think of, but it s no use I won t tell anyone You should see the trained seal that we now have in her place—our new Operating Vice President Oh sure we have one—that is we have and we haven t It s like everything they do today—it is and it ain t at the same time His name is Clifton Locey—he s from Jim s personal staff—a bright, progressive young man of forty seven and a friend of Jim s He s only supposed to be pinch hitting for her but he sits in her office and we all know that that s the new Operating Vice President He gives the orders—that is he sees to it that he s never caught actually giving an order He works very hard at making sure that no decision can ever be pinned down on him so that he won t be blamed for anything You see his purpose is not to operate a railroad but to hold a job He doesn t want to run trains—he wants to please Jim. He doesn't give a damn whether there s a single train moving or not so long as he can make a good impression on Jim and on the boys in Washington So far Mr Clifton Locey has managed to frame up two men a young third assistant for not relaying an order which Mr Locey had never given—and the freight manager for issuing an order which Mr Locey *did* give only the freight

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the midst of the most irrelevant drivel—what Miss Taggart used to do in such an emergency I tell him whenever I can I tell myself that it s Taggart Transcontinental and and there s thousands of lives on dozens of trains that hang on our decisions Between emergencies Mr Locey goes out of his way to be rude to me—that s so I wouldn t think that he needs me He s made it a point to change everything she used to do in every respect that doesn't matter but he s damn cautious not to change anything that matters. The only trouble is that he can t always tell which is which

his first day in her office he told me that it wasn t a good idea

once She told me not to . Last week, I almost quit It was ver Chick's Special Mr Chick Morrison of Washington whoever he hell he is, has gone on a speaking tour of the whole country—to peak about the directive and build up the people's morale as things are getting to be pretty wild everywhere He demanded a special rain, for himself and party—a sleeper, a parlor car and a diner with barroom and lounge The Unification Board gave him permission to travel at a hundred miles an hour—by reason, the ruling said of this being a non profit journey Well, so it is It's just a journey to talk people into continuing to break their backs at making profits in order

[illegible] the system [illegible]

You know the way our Diesels break down nowadays [illegible] breathing their last—so you can understand why that extra Diesel had to be kept at the tunnel I explained it to Mr Locey I threatened him, I pleaded, I told him that she had made it our strictest rule that Winston Station was never to be left without an extra Diesel. He told me to remember that he was not Miss Taggart—as if I could ever forget it!—and that the rule was nonsense because nothing had happened all these years so Winston could do without a Diesel for a couple of months and he wasn't going to worry about some theoretical disaster in the future when we were up against the very real practical immediate disaster of getting Mr Chick Morrison angry at us Well Chick's Special got the Diesel The superintendent of the Colorado Division quit. Mr Locey gave that job to a friend of his own I wanted to quit I had never wanted to so badly But I didn't. No I haven't heard from her I haven't heard a word since she left. Why do you keep questioning me about her? Forget it She won't be back. I don't know what it is that I'm hoping for Nothing I guess I just go day by day, and I try not to look ahead At first, I hoped that somebody would save us I thought maybe it would be Hank Rearden. But he gave in I don't know what they did to him to make him [illegible] something terrible Every- [illegible] it wondering wh- [illegible] nobody knows [illegible] to see anyon-

But, listen, I'll tell you something else that everybody's whisperin about Lean closer, will you?—I don't want to speak too loudly They say that Orren Boyle seems to have known about that directiv long ago, weeks or months in advance, because he had started quietly and secretly, to reconstruct his furnaces for the productio of Rearden Metal, in one of his lesser steel plants, an obscure littl place way out on the coast of Maine He was ready to start pourin the Metal the moment Rearden's extortion paper—I mean, Gif Certificate—was signed But—listen—the night before they were t start, Boyle's men were heating the furnaces in that place on th coast, when they heard a voice, they didn't know whether it cam from a plane or a radio or some sort of loud-speaker, but it was man's voice and it said that he would give them ten minutes to ge out of the place They got out They started going and they kept o going—because the man's voice had said that he was Ragnar Dan neskjold In the next half-hour, Boyle's mills were razed to th ground Razed, wiped out, not a brick of them left standing The say it was done by long range naval guns, from somewhere wa out on the Atlantic Nobody saw Danneskjold's ship . . That what people are whispering The newspapers haven't printed a wor about it The boys in Washington say that it's only a rumor sprea by panic mongers I don't know whether the story is true. think it is *I hope* it is You know, when I was fifteen year old, I used to wonder how any man could become a criminal, I couldn't understand what would make it possible Now—now I'm glad that Ragnar Danneskjold has blown up those mills May God bless him and never let them find him, whatever and wherever he is! Yes, that's what I've come to feel. Well, how much do they think people can take? It's not so bad for me in the daytime, because I can keep busy and not think, but it gets me at night I can't sleep any more, I lie awake for hours . . . Yes!—if you want to know it—yes, it's [illegible] I'm sc [illegible] a [illegible] m [illegible] forest How do I know what might happen to her there, alone, and with the kind of gangs that are roving all through the country these nights—just through such desolate parts of the country as the Berkshires? [illegible] that she can [illegible] I cou [illegible] You [illegible] and . [illegible] just seeing you here You won't vanish, like all the others, will you What? Next week? . . . Oh, on your vacation For how long? . . How do you rate a whole month's vacation? . I wish I could do that, too—take a month off at my own expense But they wouldn't let me . Really? I envy you. . . I *wouldn't* have envied you a few years ago But now—now I'd like to get away Now I envy you—if you've been able to take off every summer for twelve years"

* *

own body and of branches stirring in the wind, with no lights the slow sparks of the fireflies flickering through the hedges.

iat means you use, how many of their judges you purchase or hether you find it necessary to stage a frame-up of my wife Do hatever you wish. But there is to be no alimony and no property ttlement." The attorney had looked at him with the hint of a

ith a kind of searching curiosity, almost as if they expected to find he scars of some physical torture on his body

He felt nothing—nothing but the sense of an even, restful twi-ight, like a spread of slag over a molten metal, when it crusts and wallows the last brilliant spurt of the white glow within He felt nothing at the thought of the looters who were now going to manu-

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the respect and the desire were gone

what men made, what they sold, where they bought his Metal or

The human

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untouched earth which he had once been able to handle—was real

He carried a gun in his pocket, as advised by the policemen of the radio car that patrolled the roads, they had warned him that no road was safe after dark, these days He felt, with a touch of mirthless amusement, that the gun had been needed at the mills, not in the peaceful safety of loneliness and night, what could some starving vagrant take from him, compared to what had been taken by men who claimed to be his protectors?

He walked with an effortless speed, feeling relaxed by a form activity that was This was his period of training

solitude, he thought, he had to learn to live without any awareness of people, the awareness that now paralyzed him with revulsion He had once built his fortune, starting out with empty hands now he had to rebuild his life, starting out with an empty spirit

He would give himself a short span of time for the training, he thought, and then he would claim the one incomparable value still left to him the one desire that had remained pure and whole he would go to Dagny Two commandments had grown in his mind one was a duty the other a passionate wish The first was never to let her learn the reason of his surrender to the looters, the second was to say to her the words which he should have known at their first meeting and should have said on the gallery of Ellis Wyatt's house

There was nothing but the strong summer starlight to guide him as he walked, but he could distinguish the highway and the remnant of a stone fence ahead, at the corner of a country crossroad The fence had nothing to protect any longer, only a spread of weeds, a willow tree bending over the road and, farther in the distance the ruin of a farmhouse with the starlight showing through its roof

He walked, thinking that even this sight still retained the power to be of value it gave him the promise of a long stretch of space undisturbed by human intrusion

The man who stepped suddenly out into the road must have come from behind the willow tree, but so swiftly that it seemed as if he had sprung up from the middle of the highway Rearden's hand went to the gun in his pocket, but stopped he knew—by the proud posture of the body standing in the open, by the straight line of the shoulders against the starlit sky—that the man was not a bandit. When he heard the voice, he knew that the man was not a beggar

"I should like to speak to you, Mr Rearden"

The voice had the firmness, the clarity and the special courtesy peculiar to men who are accustomed to giving orders

"Go ahead" said Rearden, 'provided you don t intend to ask me for help or money"

The man s garments were rough, but efficiently trim He wore dark trousers and a dark blue windbreaker closed tight at his throat, prolonging the lines of his long slender figure He wore a dark blue cap, and all that could be seen of him in the night were his hands his face and a patch of gold blond hair on his temple. The hands held no weapon, only a package wrapped in burlap the size of a carton of cigarettes

"No, Mr Rearden" he said, "I don t intend to ask you for money, but to return it to you"

"To return money?"

"Yes"

"What money?"

"A small refund on a very large debt"

"Owed by you?"

"No not by me It is only a token payment, but I want you to accept it as proof that if we live long enough, you and I, every dollar debt will be returned to you"

What debt?"

The money that was taken from you by force"

le extended the package to Rearden flipping the burlap open. rden saw the starlight run like fire along a mirror-smooth surface knew by its weight and texture that what he held was a of solid gold

le looked ... face seemed

Do you mean that you had to stalk me at night on a lonely road, rder not to rob me but to hand me a bar of gold?"

Yes."

Why?"

When robbery is done in open daylight by sanction of the law as done today then any act of honor or restitution has to be hidden erground."

What made you think that I'd accept a gift of this kind?"

It is not a g ft, Mr Rearden. It is your own money But I have favor to ask of you It is a request, not a cond tion because e can be no such thing as conditional property The gold is rs so you are free to use it as you please But I risked my life ... as a favor that you save ... On nothing but your own ... ay and above all do not ... u o your business"

Why?"

Because I don t want it to be of any benefit to anybody but you erwise, I w ll have broken an oath taken long ago—as I am ...

I ... d

Then why d d you?"

Because I couldn t stand it any longer"

Stand what?

I thought that I had seen everything one could see and that there nothing I could not stand seeing But when they took Rearden al away from you it was too much even for *me* I know that don't need this gold at present What you need is the justice ch it represents, and the knowledge that *there* are men who care justice"

ruggling not to give in to an emotion wh ch he felt rising ugh his bewilderment past all his doubts, Rearden tried to y the man s face searching for some clue to help h m under d. But the face had no *expression* it had not changed e speaking it looked as if the man had lost the capacity to ago, and what rema

implacable and dead With a shudder of astonishment, Reardeṇ found himself thinking that it was not the face of a man, but of an avenging angel

'Why did you care?' asked Rearden "What do I mean to you?"

'Much more than you have reason to suspect. And I have a friend to whom you mean much more than you will ever learn. He would have given anything to stand by you today But he can't come to you So I came in his place"

"What friend?

'I prefer not to name him"

"Did you say that you've spent a long time collecting this money for me?

. . . the gol

account . . . for you

"What account?

"If you try to think of all the money that has been taken from you by force, you will know that your account represents a considerable sum

"How did you collect it? Where did this gold come from?"

"It was taken from those who robbed you'

"Taken by whom?

"By me

"Who are you?'

"Ragnar Danneskjold."

Rearden looked at him for a long still moment, then let the gold fall out of his hands

. . . ground but remained . . . "Would you rath . . . which law shou . . .

. . . if he were seen . . .

to be a victim who works for the benefit of his own despoilers did not choose to be either"

"You chose to live by means of force like the rest of them."

"Yes—openly Honestly, if you will I do not rob men who a . . . help me. I do n

I have no answer to give you " said Rearden his voice low
'Why should you be shocked Mr Rearden? I am merely com
ing with the system which my fellow men have established If
y believe that force is the proper means to deal with one another
m giving them what they ask for If they believe that the purpose
my life is to serve them let them try to enforce their creed If
y believe that my mind is their property—let them come and
it."

'But what sort of life have you chosen? To what purpose are you
ing your mind?

'To the cause of my love "

"Which is what?"

"Justice"

"Served by being a pirate?"

"By working for the day when I won t have to be a pirate any
nger"

"Wh

al"

that

Danneskjold s face did not change "It is"

"Do you expect to live to see that day?

"Yes Don t you?"

"No"

"Then what are you looking forward to, Mr Rearden?"

"Nothing"

"What are you working for?"

Rearden glanced at him Why do you ask that?

"To make you understand why I m not"

"Don t expect me ever to approve of a criminal"

"I don t expect it. But there are a few things I want to help you to
ee."

"Even if they re true, the things you said why did you choose to
e a band t? Why didn t you simply step out like— He stopped

"Like Ellis Wyatt, Mr Rearden? Like Andrew Stockton? Like
your friend Ken Danagger?"

"Yes!"

"Would you approve of that?"

"I—" He stopped shocked by his own words

The shock that came next was to see Danneskjold smile it was
like seeing the first green of spring on the sculptured planes of an
iceberg. Rearden realized suddenly for the *first* time that

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many cen

men's minds we will not b

disciplined capacity to feel too deeply The even voice was co ming dispassionately

"I wanted you to know this I wanted you to know it now it must seem to you that you're abandoned at the bottom of a among subhuman creatures who are all that's left of wanted you to know, in your most hopeless hour, that the deliverance is much closer than you think. And there was special reason why I had to speak to you and tell you my ahead of the proper time Have you heard of what Orren Boyle's steel mills on the coast of Maine?'

"Yes," said Rearden—and was shocked to hear that the came as a gasp out of the sudden jolt of eagerness within him didn't know whether it was true"

"It's true. I did it Mr Boyle is not going to manufacture Metal on the coast of Maine He is not going to anywhere Neither is any other looting louse who thinks

like Boyle think that force is all they need to rob their them see what happens when one of their betters chooses to force I wanted you to know, Mr Rearden, that none of will produce your Metal nor make a penny on it"

Because he felt an exultant desire to laugh—as he had at the news of Wyatt's fire, as he had laughed at the crash d'Anconia Copper—and knew that if he did, the thing he would hold him, would not release him this time, and he never see his mills again—Rearden drew back and, for a kept his lips closed tight to utter no sound When the moment over he said quietly, his voice firm and dead, "Take that gold yours and get away from here I won't accept the help of a nal"

Danneskjöld's face showed no reaction. "I cannot force you accept the gold, Mr Rearden But I will not take it back. You leave it lying where it is, if you wish."

"I don't want your help and I don't intend to protect you. If were within reach of a phone, I would call the police I would I will, if you ever attempt to approach me again. I'll do i self protection."

"I understand exactly what you mean."

"You know—because I've listened
me eager to hear it—that I
damn you or *anyone else*
live by, so I don't care
what manner they attemp
your manner, I will let you
no part of it. Neither as your inspiration nor as your accomplice
I expect me ever to accept your bank account, if it does ex

nd it on some extra armor plate for yourself—because I'm ng to report this to the police and give them every clue I can set them on your trail"

Danneskjold did not move or answer A freight train was rolling somewhere in the distance and darkness they could not see it, they heard the pounding beat of wheels filling the silence, and close, as if a disembodied train, reduced to a long string were going past them in the night,

wanted to help me in my most hopeless hour?" said Rear "If I am brought to where my only defender is a pirate, then n't care to be defended any longer You speak some remnant

I started and I will go down with the last of it. I don't I want to understand me, but—"

of light hit them with the violence of a physical blow of the train had swallowed the noise of the motor and heard the approach of the car that swept out of the from behind the farmhouse They were not in the car's they heard the screech of brakes behind the two head lling an invisible shape to a stop It was Rearden who ick involuntarily and had time to marvel at his com e swiftness of Danneskjold's self-control was that he did

police car and it stopped beside them

ver leaned out. "Oh it's you Mr Rearden!" he said, is fingers to his cap "Good evening sir"

said Rearden, fighting to control the unnatural abrupt voice.

vere two patrolmen in the front seat of the car and their a tight look of purpose not the look of their usual to stop for a chat

did you walk from the mills by way of Edge- past Blacksmith Cove?"

?"

happen to see a man anywhere around these parts, a along in a hurry?"

?"

be either on foot or in a battered wreck of a car that's got dollar motor"

man?"

man with blond hair"

he?"

dn't believe it if I told you Mr Rearden Did you

n was not aware of his own questions only of the aston ct that he was able to force sounds past some beat iside his throat. He was looking straight at the po elt as if the focus of his eyes had switched to

hands relaxed, with no sign of intention to reach for a weapon, leaving the tall, straight body defenseless and open—open as to a firing squad He saw, in the light, that the face looked younger than he had thought and that the eyes were sky blue He felt that his only danger would be to glance directly at Danneskjold—and he kept his eyes on the policeman on the brass buttons of a blue uniform, but the object filling his consciousness, more forcefully than a visual perception, was Danneskjold's body, the naked body under the clothes, the body that would be wiped out of existence He did not hear his own words, because he kept hearing a single sentence

"No," said Rearden "I didn t."

The policeman shrugged regretfully and closed his hands about the steering wheel. "You didn't see any man that looked suspicious?"

"No"

"Nor any strange car passing you on the road?"

"No"

The policeman reached for the starter "They got word that he was seen ashore in these parts tonight, and they've thrown a drag net over five counties We're not supposed to mention his name, not to scare the folks, but he's a man whose head is worth three million dollars in rewards from all over the world"

He had pressed the starter and the motor was churning the air with bright cracks of sound, when the second policeman leaned forward. He had been looking at the blond hair under Danneskjold's cap

"Who is that, Mr Rearden?" he asked.

"My new bodyguard," said Rearden

"Oh ! A sensible precaution, Mr Rearden, in times like these Good night, sir"

The motor jerked forward. The red taillights of the car went shrinking down the road ... en glanced ... at he had ... gun in his

... Danneskjold smiled It was a smile of radiant amusement, the silent laughter of a clear, young ... glad to have lived A ... other, the smile ...

"You haven ... body-guard—that s ... more ways than you can know at present. Thanks, Mr Rearden, and so long—we'll meet again much sooner than I had hoped"

He was gone before Rearden could answer. He vanished beyond

e stone fence, as abruptly and soundlessly as he had come. When

Kip Chalmers swore as the train lurched and spilled his cocktail ver the table top. He slumped forward, his elbow in the puddle, nd said·

"God damn these railroads! What's the matter with their track? You'd think with all the money they've got they'd disgorge a little, so we wouldn't have to bump like farmers on a hay cart!"

His three companions did not take the trouble to answer. It was late, and they remained in the lounge merely because an effort was needed to retire to their compartments. The lights of the lounge looked like feeble portholes in a fog of cigarette smoke dank with the odor of alcohol It was a private car, which Chalmers had

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stubborn monotone of the unthinking which asserts an end without concern for the means

"God ... know it?"

He
ed
a
cal
in
hat

breeding that kind of aristocracy The college had taught ... that the purpose of ideas is to fool those who are stupid enough to ... with the grace of a cat- ... to ...

Slouch.

For reasons of his own particular strategy, Kip Chalmers had decided to enter popular politics and to run for election as Legislator from California, though he knew nothing about that state except the movie industry and the beach clubs His campaign manager had done the preliminary work, and Chalmers was now on his way

[illegible] an overpublicized

had wanted him

a Washington to

ain possible. He

had shown no concern about the rally until this evening, when he noticed that the Comet was running six hours late

His three companions did not mind his mood· they liked his liquor Lester Tuck, his campaign manager, was a small, aging man with a face that looked as if it had once been punched in and had never rebounded. He was an attorney who, some generations earlier, would have represented shoplifters and people who stag

[illegible] he found tha

iked he

a movie

actress who had forced her way from competent featured player to incompetent star, not by means of sleeping with studio executives, but by taking the long-distance short cut of sleeping with bureaucrats She talked economics, instead of glamour, for press interviews, in the belligerently righteous style of a third rate tabloid her economics consisted of the assertion that "we've got to help the poor"

Gilbert Keith Worthing was Chalmers' guest, for no reason that either of them could discover He was a British novelist of world fame, who had been popular thirty years ago, since then, nobody bothered to read what he wrote, but everybody accepted him as a walking classic He had been considered profound for uttering such things as "Freedom? Do let's stop talking about freedom Freedom is impossible Man can never be free of hunger, of cold, of disease, of physical accidents He can never be free of the tyranny of nature So why should he object to the tyranny of a political dictatorship?" When all of Europe put into practice the ideas which he had preached, he came to live in America Through the years, his style of writing and his body had grown flabby At seventy, he was an

[illegible] of cyni

all

ned

ing,

y're

doing it on purpose They want to ruin my campaign, I can't miss that rally! For Christ's sake, Lester, do something!"

"I've tried," said Lester Tuck. At the train's last stop, he had tried, by long-distance telephone, to find air transportation to complete their journey; but there were no commercial flights scheduled for the next two days.

"If they don't get me there on time, I'll have their scalps and

...m to get me where I want to go when I want it. Don't they know ...at I'm on this train?"

"They know it by now," said Laura Bradford. "Shut up Kip You ...re me."

...e glass bay of the observation window at the end of the car, ...cept the small halos of red and green lanterns marking the rear ... the train and a brief stretch of rail running away from them ...to the darkness A wall of rock was racing the train and the stars ...pped occasionally into a sudden break that outlined high above ...em the peaks of the mountains of Colorado

"Mountains " said Gilbert Keith Worthing with satisfaction. ...t is a spectacle of this kind that makes one feel the insignificance ... man. What is this presumptuous little bit of rail which crude ...aterialists are so proud of building—compared to that eternal ...andeur? No more than the basting thread of a seamstress on the ...m of the garment of nature If a single one of those granite giants

...aura Bradford, with

... this damn train is going slower said Kip Chalmers ...hose bastards are slowing down, in spite of what I told them!"

"Well it's the mountains you know " said Lester Tuck.

"Mountains be damned! Lester, what day is this? With all those ...mn changes of time, I can't tell which—"

"It's May ...

...ung glancing

"...ep," said Lester Tuck.

"We won't make it! We—"

The train gave a sharper lurch knocking the glass out of his hand ...e thin sound of its crash against the floor mixed with the screech ... the wheel flanges tearing against the rail of a sharp curve

"I say," asked Gilbert Keith Worthing nervously, "are your rail...ads safe?"

"Hell, yes!" said Kip Chalmers "We've got so many rules regu...tions and controls that those bastards wouldn't dare not to be ...fe! Lester how far are we now? What's the next stop?"

"There won't be any stop till Salt Lake City"

"I mean what's the next station?"

Lester Tuck produced a soiled map, which he had

every few minutes since nightfall Winston" he said. "Winston, Colorado

Kip Chalmers reached for another glass

'Tinky Holloway said that Wesley said that if you don't win this election you're through said Laura Bradford She sat sprawled in her chair looking past Chalmers studying her own face in a mirror on the wall of the lounge, she was bored and it amused her to needle his impotent anger

Oh he did did he?

Uh huh Wesley doesn't want what's his name—whoever's running against you—to get into the Legislature If you don't win Wesley will be sore as hell Tinky said—

Damn that bastard! He'd better watch his own neck!"

Oh I don't know Wesley likes him very much" She added 'Tinky Holloway wouldn't allow some miserable train to make him miss an important meeting They wouldn't dare to hold *him* up"

Kip Chalmers sat staring at his glass I'm going to have the government seize all the railroads" he said his voice low

Really said Gilbert Keith Worthing I don't see why you haven't done it long ago This is the only country on earth backward enough to permit private ownership of railroads.

Well we're catching up with you" said Kip Chalmers

Your country is so incredibly naive It's such an anachronism All that talk about liberty and human rights—I haven't heard it since the days of my great grandfather It's nothing but a verbal luxury of the rich After all it doesn't make any difference to the poor whether their livelihood is at the mercy of an industrialist or a bureaucrat"

"The day of the industrialists is over This is the day of—"

The jolt felt as if the air within the car smashed them forward while the floor stopped under their feet Kip Chalmers was flung down to the carpet Gilbert Keith Worthing was thrown across the table top the lights were blasted out Glasses crashed off the shelves the steel of the walls screamed as if about to rip open while a long distant thud went like a convulsion through the wheels of the train

When he raised his head Chalmers saw that the car stood intact and still he heards the moans of his companions and the first shriek of Laura Bradford's hysterics He crawled along the floor to the doorway wrenched it open and tumbled down the steps Far ahead, on the side of a curve he saw moving flashlights and a red glow at a spot where the engine had no place to be He stumbled through the darkness bumping into half-clothed figures that waved the futile little flares of matches Somewhere along the line he saw a man with a flashlight and seized his arm It was the conductor

"What happened?" gasped Chalmers

"Split rail the conductor answered impassively "The engine went off the track."

"Off ?"

"On its side"

"Anybody killed?"

No The engineer's all right. The fireman is hurt."

Split rail? What do you mean, split rail?"

he conductor's face had an odd look it was grim, accusing closed. "Rail wears out, Mr Chalmers," he answered with a nge kind of emphasis "Particularly on curves"

Didn't you know that it was worn out?"

We knew"

Well, why didn't you have it replaced?"

[illegible] cancelled that."

[illegible] nt"

[illegible] to look at him [illegible] fault "Well . . .

ll, aren't you going to put the engine back on the track?"

"That engine's never going to be put back on any track, from looks of it"

"But . . it's got to move us!"

"It can't."

Beyond the few moving flares and the dulled sounds of screams, halmers sensed suddenly, not wanting to look at it, the black mensity of the mountains, the silence of hundreds of uninhabited miles, and the precarious strip of a ledge hanging between wall of rock and an abyss He gripped the conductor's arm ghter

"But . . . but what are we going to do?"

"The engineer's gone to call Winston"

"Call? How?"

"There's a phone couple of miles down the track"

"Will they get us out of here?"

"They will"

"But . . " Then his mind made a connection with the past and the future, and his voice rose to a scream for the first time "How long will we have to wait?"

"I don't know," said the conductor He threw Chalmers' hand off his arm, and walked away

The night operator of Winston Station listened to the phone message, dropped the receiver and raced up the stairs to shake the station agent out of bed The station agent was a husky, surly drifter who had been assigned to the job ten days ago by order of the new division superintendent He stumbled dazedly to his feet, but he was knocked awake when the operator s words reached his brain.

"What?" he gasped "Jesus! The Comet? . . Well, don't stand there shaking! Call Silver Springs!"

The night dispatcher of the Division Headquarters at Silver Springs listened to the message, then telephoned Dave Mitchum, the new superintendent of the Colorado Division.

"The Comet?" gasped Mitchum, his hand pressing the telephone receiver to his ear, his feet hitting the floor and throwing him upright, out of bed "The engine done for? The *Diesel?*"

"Yes, sir."

"Oh God! Oh, God Almighty! What are we going to do?" Th remembering his position, he added, "Well, send out the wreck train"

"I have"

"Call the operator at Sherwood to hold all traffic."

"I have"

"What have you got on the sheet?"

"The Army Freight Special, westbound But it's not due f about four hours It's running late"

"I'll be right down Wait, listen, get Bill, Sandy a Clarence down by the time I get there There's going to be h to pay!"

Dave Mitchum had always complained about injustice, becaus he said, he had always had bad luck He explained it by speakin darkly about the conspiracy of the big fellows, who would neve give him a chance, though he did not explain just whom he mea by "the big fellows" Seniority of service was his favorite topic c complaint and sole standard of value, he had been in the railroa business longer than many men who had advanced beyond hin this, he said was proof of the social system's injustice—thoug he never explained just what he meant by "the social system" He had worked for many railroads, but had not stayed long wit any one of them His employers had had no specific misdeeds t charge against him, but had simply eased him out, because he said "Nobody told me to!" too often He did not know that he owe his present job to a deal between James Taggart and Wesley Mouch when Taggart traded to Mouch the secret of his sister's privat life, in exchange for a raise in rates, Mouch made him throw i an extra favor, by their customary rules of bargaining, which con sisted of [illegible] The extra

w [illegible]

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opinion James Taggart pushed the responsibility of finding a job for Mitchum onto Clifton Locey Locey pushed Mitchum into the first job that came up—superintendent of the Colorado Division—when the man holding it quit without notice The man quit when the extra Diesel engine of Winston Station was given to Chick Morrison's Special

"What are we going to do?" cried Dave Mitchum rushing, half dressed and groggy with sleep, into his office, where the chief dispatcher, the trainmaster and the road foreman of engines were waiting for him

The three men did not answer They were middle aged men with years of railroad service behind them A month ago, they would have volunteered their advice in any emergency; but they were beginning to learn that things had changed and that it was danger-ous to speak

"What in hell are we going to do?"

"One thing is certain," said Bill Brent, the chief dispatcher. "We can't send a train into the tunnel with a coal burning engine"

Dave Mitchum's eyes grew sullen he knew that this was the thought on all their minds, he wished Brent had not named

Vell, where do we get a Diesel?" he asked angrily.

Ve don't," said the road foreman.

3ut we can't keep the Comet waiting on a siding all night!"

Looks like we'll have to," said the trainmaster "What's the of talking about it, Dave? You know that there is no Diesel where on the division"

But Christ Almighty, how do they expect us to move trains iout engines?"

Miss Taggart didn't," said the road foreman "Mr Locey does"

Bill," asked Mitchum, in the tone of pleading for a favor, i't there anything transcontinental that s due tonight, with any l of a Diesel?'

The first one to come," said Bill Brent implacably, "will be mber 236, the fast freight from San Francisco, which is due at nston at seven-eighteen A M" He added, "That s the Diesel sest to us at this moment I've checked"

'What about the Army Special?'

'Better not think about it, Dave That one has superiority over erything on the line, including the Comet, by order of the my They're running late as it is—journal boxes caught fire ice They're carrying munitions for the West Coast arsenals tter pray that nothing stops them on your division If you think 'll catch hell for holding the Comet, it's nothing to what we'll tch if we try to stop that Special"

They remained silent The windows were open to the summer ght and they could hear the ringing of the telephone in the spatcher's office downstairs The signal lights winked over the

[illegible]

basis.

"I was only thinking," snapped Mitchum

"Better not think of it," said Brent softly.

"I haven't said anything!"

"What was that talk you had with Dick Horton before he quit?" he road foreman asked too innocently, as if the subject were relevant "Wasn't it something about the ventilation system of he tunnel being on the bum? Didn't he say that that tunnel was ardly safe nowadays even for Diesel engines?"

"Why d[illegible] Mitchum "I haven't said [illegible] engineer, had quit three [illegible] ad foreman answered in- nocently

"Look, Dave," said Bill Brent, knowing that Mitchum stall for another hour rather than formulate a decision,

know that there s only one thing to do hold the Comet at Winston till morning wait for Number 236 have her Diesel take the Comet through the tunnel then let the Comet finish her run with the best coal burner we can give her on the other side."

"But how late will that make her?

Brent shrugged Twelve hours—eighteen hours—who knows?"

Eighteen hours—for the Comet? Christ, that s never happened before!

"None of what s been happening to us has ever happened before," said Brent with an astonishing sound of weariness in his brisk, competent voice

But they ll blame us for it in New York! They'll put all the blame on us!

Brent shrugged A month ago he would have considered such an injustice inconceivable today he knew better

I guess said Mitchum miserably, "I guess there s nothing else that we can do

"There isn t, Dave"

"Oh God! Why did this have to happen to us?"

"Who is John Galt?

It was half past two when the Comet pulled by an old switch engine jerked to a stop on a siding of Winston Station Kip Chalmers glanced out with incredulous anger at the few shanties on a desolate mountainside and at the ancient hovel of a station.

Now what? What in hell are they stopping *here* for? he cried, and rang for the conductor

With the return of motion and safety, his terror had turned into rage He felt almost as if he had been cheated by having been made to experience an unnecessary fear His companions were still clinging to the tables of the lounge, they felt too shaken to sleep

"How long? the conductor said impassively, in answer to his question "Till morning Mr Chalmers"

Chalmers stared at him stupefied. "We re going to stand here till morning?

"Yes Mr Chalmers"

"Here?

"Yes"

"But I have a rally in San Francisco in the evening!"

The conductor did not answer

"Why? Why do we have to stand? Why in hell? What happened?

Slowly patiently with contemptuous politeness the conductor gave him an exact account of the situation But years ago in grammar school in high school in college Kip Chalmers had been taught that man does not and need not live by reason.

"Damn your tunnel!" he screamed "Do you think I m going to let you hold me up because of some miserable tunnel? Do you want to wreck vital national plans on account of a tunnel? Tell your engineer that I must be in San Francisco by evening and that he s got to get me there!"

"How?"

"That's *your* job, not mine!"

"There is no way to do it"

"Then find a way, God damn you!'

The conductor did not answer

"Do you think I'll let your miserable technological problems erfere with crucial social issues? Do you know who I am? ll that engineer to start moving if he values his job!"

"The engineer has his orders"

"Orders be damned! *I* give the orders these days! Tell him to irt at once!"

"Perhaps you'd better speak to the station agent, Mr Chalmers have no authority to answer you as I'd like to," said the conictor and walked out

Chalmers leaped to his feet "Say, Kip " said Lester Tuck ieasily "maybe it's true maybe they can't do it"

"They can if they have to!" snapped Chalmers, marching resotely to the door

Years ago, in college he had been taught that the only effective ieans to impel men to action was fear

In the dilapidated office of Winston Station he confronted a eepy man with slack, worn features, and a frightened young boy ho sat at the operator's desk. They listened in silent stupor, to stream of profanity such as they had never heard from any section ang.

"—and it's not *my* problem how you get the train through the innel that's for *you* to figure out!" Chalmers concluded "But f you don't get me an engine and don't start that train, you can iss good bye to your jobs, your work permits and this whole oddamn railroad!"

The station agent had never heard of Kip Chalmers and did iot know the nature of his position. But he knew that this was he day when unknown men in undefined positions held unlimited power—the power of life or death

"It's not up to us Mr Chalmers," he said pleadingly "We don't ssue the orders out here The order came from Silver Springs Suppose you telephone Mr Mitchum and—"

"Who's Mr Mitchum?"

"He's the division superintendent at Silver Springs Suppose you send him a message to —"

"I should bother with a division superintendent! I'll send a mes sage to Jim Taggart—that's what I'm going to do '

Before the station agent had time to recover Chalmers whirled to the boy, ordering "You—take this down and send it at once!

It was a message which, a month ago the station agent would not have accepted from any passenger, the rules forbade it but he was not certain about any rules any longer

Mr James Taggart, New York City Am held up on the Comet at Winston, Colorado, by the incompetence of your men, who refuse to give me an engine Have meeting in San Francisco in the evening of top-level national importance If you

don't move my train at once, I'll let you guess the consequences Kip Chalmers.

After the boy had transmitted the words onto the wires that stretched from pole to pole across a continent as guardians of the Taggart track—after Kip Chalmers had returned to his car to wait for an answer—the station agent telephoned Dave Mitchum, who was his friend, and read to him the text of the message. He heard Mitchum groan in answer.

"I thought I'd tell you, Dave. I never heard of the guy before but maybe he's somebody important."

"I don't know!" moaned Mitchum "Kip Chalmers? You see his name in the newspapers all the time, right in with all the top level boys I don't know what he is, but if he's from Washington we can't take any chances Oh Christ, what are we going to do?

We can't take any chances—thought the Taggart operator in New York, and transmitted the message by telephone to James Taggart's home It was close to six A M in New York, and James Taggart was awakened out of the fitful sleep of a restless night He listened to the telephone, his face sagging He felt the same fear as the station agent of Winston, and for the same reason

He called the home of Clifton Locey. All the rage which he could not pour upon Kip Chalmers, was poured over the telephone wire upon Clifton Locey "Do something!" screamed Taggart. "I don't care what you do, it's *your* job, not mine, but see to it that that train gets through! What in hell is going on? I never heard of the Comet being held up! Is that how you run your department? It's a fine thing when important passengers have to start sending messages to *me!* At least, when my sister ran the place, I wasn't awakened in the middle of the night over every spike that broke in Iowa—Colorado, I mean!"

"I'm so sorry, Jim," said Clifton Locey smoothly, in a tone that balanced apology, reassurance and the right degree of patronizing confidence "It's just a misunderstanding It's somebody's stupid mistake Don't worry, I'll take care of it. I was, as a matter of fact, in bed, but I'll attend to it at once."

Clifton Locey was not in bed, he had just returned from a round of night clubs, in the company of a young lady He asked her to wait and hurried to the offices of Taggart Transcontinental. None of the night staff who saw him there could say why he chose *to appear* in person, but neither could they say that it had been unnecessary He rushed in and out of several offices, was seen by many people and gave an impression of great activity The only *physical result* of it was an order that went over the wires to Dave Mitchum, superintendent of the Colorado Division

"Give an engine to Mr. Chalmers at once. Send the Comet through *safely* and without unnecessary delay If you are unable to perform your duties, I shall hold you responsible before the Unification Board Clifton Locey."

Then, calling his girl friend to join him, Clifton Locey drove to a country roadhouse—to make certain that no one would be able find him in the next few hours.

The dispatcher at Silver Springs was baffled by the order that he handed to Dave Mitchum, but Dave Mitchum understood He knew that no railroad order would ever speak in such terms as giving an engine to a passenger; he knew that the thing was a show piece he guessed what sort of show was being staged and he felt a cold sweat at the realization of who was being framed as the goat of the show

"What's the matter, Dave?" asked the trainmaster

Mitchum did not answer He seized the telephone, his hands shaking as he begged for a connection to the Taggart operator in New York He looked like an animal in a trap

He begged the New York operator to get him Mr Clifton Locey's home The operator tried There was no answer He begged the operator to keep on trying and to try every number he could think of, where Mr Locey might be found The operator promised and [illegible] s useless to wait or to

[illegible] w by the look on the trainmaster's face that the trap was as bad as he had suspected

He called the Region Headquarters of Taggart Transcontinental at Omaha, Nebraska, and begged to speak to the general manager of the region There was a brief silence on the wire, then the voice of the Omaha operator told him that the general manager had resigned and vanished three days ago—'over a little trouble with Mr. Locey," the voice added.

He asked to speak to the assistant general manager in charge of his particular district, but the assistant was out of town for the week end and could not be reached

"Get me somebody else!" Mitchum screamed "Anybody, of any district! For Christ's sake, get me somebody who'll tell me what to do!"

The man who came on the wire was the assistant general manager of the Iowa Minnesota District.

"What?" he interrupted at Mitchum's first words "At Winston, Colorado? Why in hell are you calling *me*? No, don't tell me what happened, I don't want to know it! No, I said! No! You're not going to frame me into having to explain afterwards why I did or didn't do anything about whatever it is It's not *my* problem! . . . Speak to some region executive, don't pick on me, what do I have to do with Colorado? . . Oh hell, I don't know, get the chief engineer, speak to him!"

The chief engineer of the Central Region answered impatiently, "Yes? What? What is it?"—and Mitchum rushed desperately to explain. When the chief engineer heard that there was no Diesel, he snapped "Then hold the train, of course!" When he heard about Mr Chalmers, he said, his voice suddenly subdued, "Hm . . . Kip Chalmers? Of Washington? . Well, I don't [illegible] would be a matter for Mr Locey to decide " When [illegible] "Mr. Locey ordered me to arrange it, but—" the [illegible]

snapped in great relief, "Then do exactly as Mr Locey says!" and hung up

Dave Mitchum replaced the telephone receiver cautiously He did not scream any longer Instead, he tiptoed to a chair, almost as if he were sneaking He sat looking at Mr Locey's order for a long time

Then he snatched a glance about the room The dispatcher was busy at his telephone The trainmaster and the road foreman were there but they pretended that they were not waiting He wished Bill Brent, the chief dispatcher, would go home, Bill Brent stood in a corner, watching him

Brent was a short, thin man with broad shoulders, he was forty, but looked younger, he had the pale face of an office worker and the hard, lean features of a cowboy He was the best dispatcher on the system.

Mitchum rose abruptly and walked upstairs to his office, clutching Locey's order in his hand

Dave Mitchum was not good at understanding problems of engineering and transportation but he understood men like Clifton Locey He understood the kind of game the New York executives were playing and what they were now doing to him The order did not tell him to give Mr Chalmers a coal burning engine—just "an engine" If the time came to answer questions, wouldn't Mr Locey gasp in shocked indignation that he had expected a division superintendent to know that only a Diesel engine could be meant in that order? The order stated that he was to send the Comet through '*safely* —wasn t a division superintendent expected to know what was safe?—"and without unnecessary delay" What was an *unnecessary* delay? If the possibility of a major disaster was involved, wouldn t a delay of a week or a month be considered necessary?

The New York executives did not care, thought Mitchum, they did not care whether Mr Chalmers reached his meeting on time, or whether an unprecendented catastrophe struck their rails, they cared only about making sure that they would not be blamed for either If he held the train, they would make him the scapegoat to appease the anger of Mr Chalmers if he sent the train through and it did not reach the western portal of the tunnel, they would put the blame on his incompetence, they would claim that he had acted against their orders, in either case What would he be able to prove? To whom? One could prove nothing to a tribunal that had no stated policy, no defined procedure no rules of evidence no binding principles—a tribunal, such as the Unification Board, that pronounced men guilty or innocent as it saw fit, with no standard of guilt or innocence

Dave Mitchum knew nothing about the philosophy of law; but he knew that when a court is not bound by any rules, it is not bound by any facts, and then a hearing is not an issue of justice, but an issue of men, and your fate depends not on what you have or have not done but on whom you do or do not know He asked what chance he would have at such a hearing against Mr

James Taggart, Mr Clifton Locey, Mr Kip Chalmers and their powerful friends.

Dave Mitchum had spent his life slipping around the necessity of ever making a decision, he had done it by waiting to be told and never being certain of anything All that he now allowed into his brain was a long, indignant whine against injustice. Fate, he thought, had singled him out for an unfair amount of bad luck· he was being framed by his superiors on the only good job he had ever held. He had never been taught to understand that the manner in which he obtained this job, and the frame up, were inextricable parts of a single whole

As he looked at Locey's order, he thought that he could hold the Comet, attach Mr Chalmers' car to an engine and send it into the tunnel, alone But he shook his head before the thought was fully formed he knew that this would force Mr Chalmers to recognize the nature of the risk, Mr Chalmers would refuse, he would continue to demand a safe and non-existent engine And more this would mean that he, Mitchum, would have to assume responsibility, admit full knowledge of the danger, stand in the open and identify the exact nature of the situation—the one act which the policy of his superiors was based on evading, the one key to their game.

Dave Mitchum was not the man to rebel against his background or to question the moral code of those in charge The choice he made was not to challenge, but to follow the policy of his superiors Bill Brent could have beaten him in any contest of technology, but here was an endeavor at which he could beat Bill Brent without effort. There had once been a society where men needed the particular talents of Bill Brent, if they wished to survive, what they needed now was the talent of Dave Mitchum

Dave Mitchum sat down at his secretary s typewriter and, by means of two fingers, carefully typed out an order to the train master and another to the road foreman. The first instructed the trainmaster to summon a locomotive crew at once, for a purpose described only as "an emergency", the second instructed the road foreman to "send the best engine available to Winston, to stand by for emergency assistance."

He put carbon copies of the orders into his own pocket, then opened the door, yelled for the night dispatcher to come up and handed him the two orders for the two men downstairs The night dispatcher was a conscientious young boy who trusted his superiors and knew that discipline was the first rule of the railroad business He was astonished that Mitchum should wish to send written orders down one flight of stairs, but he asked no questions

Mitchum waited nervously After a while he saw the figure of the road foreman walking across the yards toward the roundhouse. He felt relieved the two men had not come up to confront him in person, they had understood and they would play the game as he was playing it.

The road foreman walked across the yards, looking the ground. He was thinking of his wife, his two child

house which he had spent a lifetime to own. He knew what his superiors were doing and he wondered whether he should refuse to obey them He had never been afraid of losing his job, with the confidence of a competent man, he had known that if he quarreled with one employer, he would always be able to find another Now he was afraid, he had no right to quit or to seek a job, if he defied an employer he would be delivered into the unanswerable power of a single Board and if the Board ruled against him, it would mean being sentenced to the slow death of starvation it would mean being barred from any employment He knew that the Board would rule against him he knew that the key to the dark, capricious mystery of the Board s contradictory decisions was the secret power of pull What chance would he have against Mr Chalmers? There had been a time when the self interest of his employers had demanded that he exercise his utmost ability Now, ability was not wanted any longer There had been a time when he had been required to do his best and rewarded accordingly Now, he could expect nothing but punishment, if he tried to follow his con science There had been a time when he had been expected to think Now they did not want him to think, only to obey They did not want him to have a conscience any longer Then why should he raise his voice? For whose sake? He thought of the passengers —the three hundred passengers aboard the Comet He thought of his children He had a son in high school and a daughter, nineteen of whom he was fiercely, painfully proud, because she was recognized as the most beautiful girl in town He asked himself whether he could deliver his children to the fate of the children of the unemployed as he had seen them in the blighted areas, in the settlements around closed factories and along the tracks of discontinued railroads He saw, in astonished horror, that the choice which he now had to make was between the lives of his children and the lives of the passengers on the Comet. A conflict of this kind had never been possible before It was by protecting the safety of the passengers that he had earned the security of his children he had served one by serving the other, there had been no clash of interests, no call for victims Now, if he wanted to save the passengers he had to do it at the price of his children. He remembered dimly the sermons he had heard about the beauty of self immolation, about the virtue of sacrificing to others that which was one s dearest He knew nothing about the philosophy of ethics, but he knew suddenly—not in words, but in the form of a dark, angry, savage pain—that if this was virtue, then he wanted no part of it

He walked into the roundhouse and ordered a large, ancient coal burning locomotive to be made ready for the run to Winston.

The trainmaster reached for the telephone in the dispatcher's [illegible] stopped.

[illegible]

ical sensation of cold, nothing more, he felt no concern, only a

uzzled, indifferent astonishment. It had never been his job to call en out to die, his job had been to call them out to earn their liv- g It was strange, he thought, and it was strange that his hand had opped, what made it stop was like something he would have felt venty years ago—no, he thought, strange, only one month ago, ot longer.

He was forty-eight years old. He had no family, no friends, no es to any living being in the world. Whatever capacity for devotion e had possessed, the capacity which others scatter among many ndom concerns, he had given it whole to the person of his young rother—the brother, his junior by twenty five years, whom he had rought up. He had sent him through a technological college, and e had known, as had all the teachers, that the boy had the mark of enius on the forehead of his grim, young face With the same single- racked devotion as his brother's, the boy had cared for nothing but is studies not for sports or parties or girls only for the vision of he th [illegible]

[illegible]

May 1 that he had been informed that his brother had committed uicide

The tra [illegible]

[illegible] that it would be bad for the country s morale.

The trainmaster knew nothing about political philosophy, but he knew that that had been the moment when he lost all concern for the life or death of any human being or of the country

He thought holding the telephone receiver that maybe he should warn the men whom he was about to call They trusted him it would never occur to them that he could knowingly send them to their death. But he shook his head this was only an old thought, last year s thought, a remnant of the time when he had trusted them, too It did not matter now His brain worked slowly as if he were dragging his thoughts through a vacuum where no emotion responded to spur them on he thought that there would be trouble if he warned anyone there would be some sort of fight and it was he who had to make some great effort to start it. He had forgotten what it was that one started this sort of fight for Truth? Justice? Brother love? He did not want to make an effort. He was very tire If he warned all the men on his list, he thought, there would

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he summoned an engineer and a fireman to report for duty at once

Engine Number 306 had left for Winston when Dave Mitchum came downstairs "Get a track motor car ready for me he ordered

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I m going to Fairmount, said Mitchum his voice was aggressively too casual as if implying that no answer was necessary "The had a Diesel there couple of weeks ago you know emergency repairs or something I'm going down to see if we coul use it "

He paused but Brent said nothing

'The way things stack up said Mitchum not looking at him "w can t hold that train till morning We ve got to take a chance or way or another Now I think maybe this Diesel will do it but that the last one we can try for So if you don t hear from me in ha an hour sign the order and send the Comet through with Numbe 306 to pull her

Whatever Brent had thought he could not believe it when I heard it He did not answer at once then he said very quietl "No

What do you mean no?"

"I won't do it "

"What do you mean you won't? It s an order!"

"I wont do it. Brent s voice had the firmness of certainty u clouded by any emotion

"Are you refusing to obey an order?"

"I am

"But you have no right to refuse! And I m not going to arg about it either It s what I ve decided it s my responsibility and I not asking for your opinion. Your job is to take my orders"

"Will you give me that order in writing?"

"Why God damn you are you hinting that you don t trust m Are you ?

"Why do you have to go to Fairmount, Dave? Why can t y telephone them about that Diesel if you think that they have one

"You're not going to tell me how to do my job! You re not goi to sit there and question me! You re going to keep your trap sh and do as you re told or I'll give you a chance to talk—to the Ui fication Board!"

It was hard to decipher emotions on Brent s cowboy face t Mitchum saw something that resembled a look of incredulo horror only it was horror at some sight of his own not at t words and it had no quality of fear, not the kind of fear Mitchu had hoped for

Brent knew that tomorrow morning the issue would be his wo

gainst Mitchum's, Mitchum would deny having given the order; Mitchum would show written proof that Engine Number 306 had been sent to Winston only "to stand by," and would produce witnesses that he had gone to Fairmount in search of a Diesel, Mitchum would claim that the fatal order had been issued by and on the sole responsibility of Bill Brent, the chief dispatcher It would not be much of a case, not a case that could bear close study, but it would be enough for the Unification Board, whose policy was consistent

expose this thing and stop it—no superior anywhere on the line, from Colorado to Omaha to New York They were in on it, all of them, they were doing the same, they had given Mitchum the lead and the method It was Dave Mitchum who now belonged on this railroad and he, Bill Brent, who did not.

As Bill Brent had learned to see, by a single glance at a few numbers on a sheet of paper, the entire trackage of a division—so he was now able to see the whole of his own life and the full price of the decision he was making He had not fallen in love until he

man must live by his own rational perception of reality, that he cannot act against it or escape it or find a substitute for it—and that there is no other way for him to live

He rose to his feet "It's true that so long as I hold this job, I cannot refuse to obey you," he said. "But I can, if I quit. So I'm quitting."

"You're *what?*"

"I'm quitting

I won't try to escape There's no place to go"

Dave Mitchum

but he

Bill Br

You can't walk out on me! I won't let you out! I won't let you leave this building tonight!"

Brent walked to the door. "Will you repeat that order you gave me in front of the others? No? Then I will."

As he pulled the door open, Mitchum's fist shot out, smashed into his face and knocked him down.

The trainmaster and the road foreman stood in the open doorway.

"He quit!" screamed Mitchum. "The yellow bastard quit at a time like this! He's a law breaker and a coward!"

In the slow effort of rising from the floor, through the haze of blood running into his eyes, Bill Brent looked up at the two men. He saw that they understood, but he saw the closed faces of men who did not want to understand, did not want to interfere and hated him for putting them on the spot in the name of justice. He said nothing, rose to his feet and walked out of the building.

Mitchum avoided looking at the others. "Hey, you," he called, jerking his head at the night dispatcher across the room. "Come here. You've got to take over at once."

With the door closed, he repeated to the boy the story of the Diesel at Fairmount, as he had given it to Brent, and the order to send the Comet through with Engine Number 306, if the boy did not hear from him in half an hour. The boy was in no condition to think, to speak or to understand anything; he kept seeing the blood on the face of Bill Brent, who had been his idol. "Yes sir," he answered numbly.

Dave Mitchum departed for Fairmount, announcing to every yardman, switchman and wiper in sight, as he boarded the track motor car, that he was going in search of a Diesel for the Comet.

The night dispatcher sat at his desk, watching the clock and the telephone, praying that the telephone would ring and let him hear from Mr. Mitchum. But the half hour went by in silence, and when there were only three minutes left, the boy felt a terror he could not explain, except that he did not want to send that order.

He turned to the trainmaster and the road foreman, asking hesitantly, "Mr. Mitchum gave me an order before he left, but I wonder whether I ought to send it, because I . . . I don't think it's right. He said—"

The trainmaster turned away; he felt no pity: the boy was about the same age as his brother had been.

The road foreman snapped, "Do just as Mr. Mitchum told you. You're not supposed to think," and walked out of the room.

The responsibility that James Taggart and Clifton Locey had evaded now rested on the shoulders of a trembling, bewildered boy. He hesitated, then he buttressed his courage with the thought that one did not doubt the good faith and the competence of railroad executives. He did not know that his vision of a railroad and its executives was that of a century ago.

With the conscientious precision of a railroad man, in the moment when the hand of the clock ended the half hour, he signed his name to the order instructing the Comet to proceed with Engine Number 306, and transmitted the order to Winston Station.

he station agent at Winston shuddered when he looked at the er, but he was not the man to defy authority. He told himself the tunnel was not, perhaps, as dangerous as he thought. He told self that the best policy, these days, was not to think

When he handed their copies of the order to the conductor and engineer of the Comet, the conductor glanced slowly about the

r it!"

alked out of the station

ad brought in Number He chuckled and said,

de s yellow"

The stat

carded

so last enough."

The fireman of Number 306 had remained in the cab of his engine He looked up uneasily, when they came to switch his engine to the head end of the Comet; he looked up at the red and green lights of the tunnel

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the lights of the tunnel, then at the long chain of the Comet's windows A few windows were lighted, but most of them showed only the feeble blue glow of night lamps edging the lowered blinds He thought that he should rouse the passengers and warn them There had been a time when he had placed the safety of the pass engers above h

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an evasion from the kind of verdicts that the Unification Board was passing on defenseless victims—why shouldn t he now turn away from them? If he saved their lives not one of them would come forward to defend him when the Unification Board would convict him for disobeying orders, for creating a panic, for delaying Mr Chalmers He had no desire to be a martyr for the sake of allowing people safely to indulge in their own irresponsible evil.

When the moment came he raised his lantern and signaled the engineer to start

See? said Kip Chalmers triumphantly to Lester Tuck, as the wheels under their feet shuddered forward. '*Fear* is the only practical means to deal with people"

The conductor stepped onto the vestibule of the last car No one saw him as he went down the steps of the other side slipped off the train and vanished into the darkness of the mountains

with a beam stretching high above his head and a jerky thunder trembling through the rail under his feet He knew that the switch

now hate his job for the rest of his life

The Comet uncoiled from the siding into a thin, straight line and went on into the mountains with the beam of the headlight like an extended arm pointing the way, and the lighted glass curve of the observation lounge ending it off

Some of the passengers aboard the Comet were awake As the train started its coiling ascent they saw the small cluster of Winston s lights at the bottom of the darkness beyond their windows, then the same darkness but with red and green lights by the hole of a tunnel on the upper edge of the windowpanes The lights of Winston kept growing smaller each time they appeared, the black hole of the tunnel kept growing larger A black veil went streaking past the windows at times dimming the lights it was the heavy smoke from the coal-burning engine

As the tunnel came closer, they saw at the edge of the sky far to the south in a void of space and rock a spot of living fire twisting in the wind They did not know what it was and did not care to learn

It is said that catastrophes are a matter of pure chance and there were those who would have said that the passengers of the Comet were not guilty or responsible for the thing that happened to them

everything is achieved collectively and that it s masses that count, not men

The man in Roomette 7, Car No 2, was a journalist who wrote ... "a good cause," ... upon ... violate ... ke of whatever he chose to consider as his own idea of "a good cause," which did not even have to be an idea, since he had never defined what he regarded as the good, but had merely stated that he went by "a feeling"—a feeling unrestrained by any knowledge, since he considered emotion superior to knowledge and relied solely on his own "good intentions" and on the power of a gun

The woman in Roomette 10, Car No 3, was an elderly school teacher who had spent her life turning class after class of helpless children into miserable cowards, by teaching them that the will of the majority is the only standard of good and evil that a majority may do anything it pleases, that they must not assert their own personalities, but must do as others were doing

The man in Drawing Room B, Car No 4, was a newspaper pub-lisher who ...

... his friends in W...

ha... he

... Car No ... was a lecturer who believed that, as a consumer she had "a right" to transportation, whether the railroad people wished to provide it or not.

The man in Roomette 2 Car No 9, was a professor of economics who advocated the abolition of private property explaining that intelligence plays no part ... is condition... a railroad ...

The wom... Car No 10 was a mother who had put her two children to sleep in the berth above her, carefully tucking them in protecting them from drafts and jolts a mother whose husband held a government job enforcing directives which she defended by saying, "I don t care, it s only the rich that they hurt. After all, I must think of my children."

The man in Roomette 3, Car No 11, was a sniveling little neurotic who wrote cheap little plays into which as a social message, he inserted cowardly little obscenities to the effect that all business men were scoundrels.

The woman in Roomette 9, Car No 12 was a housewife who believed that she had the right to elect politicians, of whom she knew nothing to control giant industries, of which she had no knowledge

The man in Bedroom F Car No 13, was a lawyer who had said "Me? I'll find a way to get along under any political system."

... of philo...

the law of cause-and-effect — ... *what's moral about* ... *men to their jobs by force?*—no morality—*what's moral about running a railroad?*—no absolutes—*what difference does it make to you whether you live or die anyway?* He taught that we know nothing—*why oppose the orders of your superiors?*—that we can never be certain of anything—*how do you know you're right?*—that we must act on the expediency of the moment—*you don't want to risk your job do you?*

The man in Drawing Room B Car No 15, was an heir who had inherited his fortune and who had kept repeating "Why should Rearden be the only one permitted to manufacture Rearden Metal?"

The man in Bedroom A Car No 16, was a humanitarian who had said "The men of ability? I do not care what or if they are made to suffer They must be penalized in order to support the incompetent Frankly I do not care whether this is just or not. I take pride in not caring to grant any justice to the able where mercy to the needy is concerned"

These passengers were awake there was not a man aboard the train who did not share one or more of their ideas As the train went into the tunnel the flame of Wyatt's Torch was the last thing they saw on earth

Chapter VIII BY OUR LOVE

The sun touched the tree tops on the slope of the hill, and they looked a bluish silver catching the color of the sky Dagny stood at the door of the cabin with the first sunrays on her forehead and miles of forest spread under her feet. The leaves went down from silver to green to the smoky blue of the shadows on the road below The light trickled down through the branches and shot upward in sudden spurts when it hit a clump of ferns that became a fountain of green rays It gave her pleasure to watch the motion of the light over a stillness where nothing else could move

... morning on the sheet ... rogression ... stillness of ... land Thus ... could not

whether she had reached it or not. She had come here with three ignments given, as orders, to herself: rest—learn to live without railroad—get the pain out of the way Get it out of the way, re the words she used. She felt as if she were tied to some unded stranger who could be stricken at any moment by an ack that would drown her in his screams She felt no pity for the anger, only a contemptuous impatience; she had to fight him and stroy him, then her way would be clear to decide what she wished do, but the stranger was not easy to fight.

The assignment to rest had been easier. She found that she liked e solitude, she awakened in the morning with a feeling of conlent benevolence, the sense that she could venture forth and be illing to deal with whatever she found In the city, she had lived in ronic tension to withstand the shock of anger, indignation, disgust, ntempt. The only danger to threaten her here was the simple pain some physical accident, it seemed innocent and easy by comparison.

[illegible]

rames of the windows Rains, weeds and brush had swallowed the teps of what had once been a terraced path rising up the hill from he road to the cabin She rebuilt it, clearing the terraces re laying he stones bracing the banks of soft earth with walls of boulders. t gave her pleasure to devise complex systems of levers and pulleys out of old scraps of iron and rope, then to move weights of rock hat were much beyond her physical power She planted a few seeds of nasturtiums and morning glories, to see one spreading slowly over he ground and the other climbing up the tree trunks, to see them grow, to see progression and movement

The work gave her the calm needed, she had not noticed how she began it or why, she had started without conscious intention, but she saw it growing under her hands, pulling her forward giving her a healing sense of peace Then she understood that what she needed was the motion to a purpose, no matter how small or in what form, the sense of an activity going step by step to some chosen end across a span of time. The work of cooking a meal was like a closed circle, completed and gone, leading nowhere But the work of building a path was a living sum, so that no day was left to die behind her, but each day contained all those that preceded it, each day acquired its immortality on every succeeding tomorrow A circle, she thought, is the movement proper to physical nature, they say that there's nothing but circular motion in the inanimate universe around [illegible] the badge of man the straight line

[illegible]

run, but what would be the imbecile torture of [illegible] that had no run to make? It is not proper for man's life to

circle, she thought, or a string of circles dropping off like zeros behind him—man's life must be a straight line of motion from goal to farther goal, each leading to the next and to a single growing sum, like a journey down the track of a railroad, from station to station to—oh, stop it!

Stop it—she told herself in quiet severity, when the scream of the wounded stranger was choked off—don't think of that, don't look too far, you like building this path, build it, don't look beyond the foot of the hill

She had driven a few times to the store in Woodstock, twenty miles away, to buy supplies and food Woodstock was a small huddle of dying structures, built generations ago for some reason and hope long since forgotten There was no railroad to feed it, no electric power, nothing but a county highway growing emptier year by year

The only store was a wooden hovel, with spider-eaten corners and a rotted patch in the middle of the floor, eaten by the rains that came through the leaking roof The storekeeper was a fat, pallid woman who moved with effort, but seemed indifferent to her own discomfort The stock of food consisted of dusty cans with faded labels, some grain, and a few vegetables rotting in ancient bins outside the door [illegible] indifferently

Driving back to the cabin, Dagny looked up at a mountain stream that fell with ferocious force down a sheer granite wall, its spray hanging like a mist of rainbows in the sun. She thought that one could build a hydroelectric plant, just large enough to supply the power for her cabin and for the town of Woodstock—Woodstock could be made to be productive—those wild apple trees she saw in such unusual numbers among the dense growth on the hillsides, were the remnants of orchards—suppose one were to reclaim them, then build a small spur to the nearest railroad—oh, stop it!

"No kerosene today, the storekeeper told her on her next trip to Woodstock "It rained Thursday night, and when it rains, the trucks can't get through Fairfield gorge, the road's flooded, and the kerosene truck won t be back this way till next month" "If you know that the road gets flooded every time it rains, why don't you people repair it?' The woman answered, "The road's always been that way."

Driving back, Dagny stopped on the crest of a hill and looked down at the miles of countryside below She looked at Fairfield gorge where the county road, twisting through marshy soil below the level of a river, got trapped in a crack between two hills. It would be simple to by pass those hills, she thought, to build a road on the other side of the river—the people of Woodstock had nothing to do, she could teach them—cut a road straight to the southwest, save miles, connect with the state highway at the freight depot of—oh, stop it!

She put her kerosene lamp aside and sat in her cabin after dark by the light of a candle, listening to the music of a small portable

n her first night in the cabin—don't think of it until you're able to ear the words as if they were "Atlantic Southern" or "Associated teel" But the weeks passed and no scar would grow over the vound.

It seemed to ha...

he window of her car on her last trip, she must tell them to replace t or they—and then she would be sitting up in bed crying, Stop t!—and stopping it, but remaining awake for the rest of that night

She would sit at the door of the cabin at sunset and watch the notion of the leaves growing still in the twilight—then she would see the sparks of the fireflies rising from the grass, flashing on and off in every darkening corner, flashing slowly as if holding one moment's warning—they were like the lights of signals winking at night over the track of a—Stop it!

It was the times when she could not stop it that she dreaded the times when, unable to stand up—as in physical pain, with no limit to divide it from the pain of her mind—she would fall down on the floor of the cabin or on the earth of the woods and sit still, with her face pressed to a chair or a rock, and fight not to let herself scream aloud, while they were suddenly as close to her and as real as the body of a lover the two lines of rail going off to a single point in the distance—the front of an engine cutting space apart by means of the letters TT—the sound of the wheels clicking in accented rhythm under the floor of her car—the statue of Nat Taggart in the concourse of the Terminal Fighting not to know them not to feel them, her body rigid but for the grinding motion of her face against her arm, she would draw whatever power over her consciousness still remained to her into the soundless, toneless repetition of the words Get it over with.

There were long stretches of calm, when she was able to face her problem with the dispassionate clarity of weighing a problem in engineering But she could find no answer She knew that her desperate longing for the railroad would vanish, were she to convince herself that it was impossible or improper But the longing came from the certainty that the truth and the right were hers—that the enemy was the irrational and the unreal—that she could not set herself another goal or summon the love to achieve it, while her rightful achievement had been lost, not to some superior power, but to a loathsome evil that conquered by means of impotence

She could renounce the railroad, she thought, she could find contentment here ... the path then

would be the limit placed on her effort Why?—she heard herself screaming aloud There was no answer

Then stay here until you answer it, she thought. You have no place to go, you can't move, you can t start grading a right-of way until . until you know enough to choose a terminal

There were long silent evenings when the emotion that made her sit still and look at the unattainable distance beyond the fading light to the south, was loneliness for Hank Rearden She wanted the sight of his unyielding face the confident face looking at her with the hint of a smile But she knew that she could not see him until her battle was won His smile had to be deserved, it was intended for an adversary who traded her strength against his, not for a pain beaten wretch who would seek relief in that smile and thus destroy its meaning He could help her to live he could not help her to decide for what purpose she wished to go on living

She had felt a faint touch of anxiety since the morning when she marked May 15 on her calendar She had forced herself to listen to news broadcasts once in a while, she had heard no mention of his name Her fear for him was her last link to the city, it kept drawing

some large bird s wings hurtling through the branches into the sky

There was another link to the past that still remained as an unsolved question Quentin Daniels and the motor that he was trying to rebuild By June 1 she would owe him his monthly check Should she tell him that she had quit that she would never need that motor and neither would the world? Should she tell him to stop and to let the remnant of the motor vanish in rust on some such junk pile as the one where she had found it? She could not force herself to

was no terminal for her to seek ahead

But it is not true—she thought as she stood at the door of her cabin on this morning of May 28—it is not true that there is no place in the future for a superlative achievement of man s mind it can never be true No matter what her problem, this would always remain to her—this immovable conviction that evil was unnatural

from the radio She barely listened, she was conscious only of the flow of chords that seemed to play an underscoring harmony for the flow of the smoke curving slowly from her cigarette, for the curv

g motion of her arm moving the cigarette to her lips once in a
le She closed her e es and stood st ll feel ng the rays of the

e noise was growing louder and that it was the sound of a motor
hen she knew that she had not admitted to herself how much she
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as no
oad.

She could not see the road—the small stretch under the arch of
ranches at the foot of the hill was her only view of it—but she
atched the car's ascent by the growing, imperious strain of the
e tires on curves
She did not recog-
t a long, gray con-
truble She saw the driver step out it was a man whose presence
ere could not be possible It was Francisco d'Anconia.

The shock she felt was not disappointment, it was more like the
ensation that disappointment would now be irrelevant It was
agerness and an odd, solemn stillness, the sudden certainty that
he was facing the approach of something unknown and of the
gravest importance

The swiftness of Francisco's movements was carrying him toward
he hill while he was raising his head to glance up He saw her
above, at the door of the cabin, and stopped She could not dis-
tinguish the express

ou have
her relea
would ha
both gor
motionle
not in the name of the present, but as a salute to their past

When he was close enough and she could distinguish his face, she
saw the look of that luminous gaiety which transcends the solemn
by proclaiming the great innocence of a man who has earned the
right to
mo
ste

belonged with this moment, yet she felt also that there was something odd about it, something important to grasp, only she could not think of it now.

"Hi, Slug!"

"Hi, Frisco!"

She knew—by the way he looked at her, by an instant's drop of his eyelids closing his eyes, by the brief pull of his head striving to lean back and resist by the faint, half smiling half helpless relaxation of his lips, by the sudden harshness of his arms as he seized her—that it was involuntary, that he had not intended it, and that it was irresistibly right for both of them

The desperate violence of the way he held her, the hurting pressure of his mouth on hers, the exultant surrender of his body to the touch of hers, were not the form of a moment's pleasure—she knew that no physical hunger could bring a man to this—she knew that it was the statement she had never heard from him, the greatest confession of love a man could make No matter what he had done to wreck his life, this was still the Francisco d Anconia in whose bed she had been so proud of belonging—no matter what betrayals she had met from the world, her vision of life had been true and some indestructible part of it had remained within him—and in answer to it, her body responded to his her arms and mouth held him, confessing her desire, confessing an acknowledgment she had always given him and always would

Then the rest of his years came back to her, with a stab of the pain of knowing that the greater his person, the more terrible his [illegible] k

[illegible] e

[illegible] ness in

[illegible] a touch

[illegible] for in

[illegible] ughing

[illegible] was

hag [illegible]

s [illegible]

she [illegible]

up [illegible]

"[illegible], that torture you've been going through, here, for the last month [illegible] answer me as honestly as you can . . . do you think you could have borne it twelve years ago?"

"No," she answered he smiled "Why do you ask that?"

"To re[illegible]"

"What [illegible]

her—"an [illegible]

"Dagn [illegible]

about it?

"How did you [illegible] Francisco! What were you whistling when you were coming up the hill?"

"Why, was I? I don t know"

"It was the Fifth Concerto by Richard Halley, wasn't it?"

'Oh . . . !" He looked startled, then smiled in amusement at him-, then answered gravely, "I'll tell you that later."

'How did you find out where I was?"

'I'll tell you that, too"

'You forced it out of Eddie"

'I haven't seen Eddie for over a year"

'He was the only one who knew it."

ve! Its my first failure, at the one time when I didn't want to il. But I didn't think you were ready to quit. Had I known it, I ould have watched you day and night."

"Really? What for?"

"To spare you"—he pointed at her work—"all this"

"Francisco," she said, her voice low, "if you're concerned about y torture, don't you know that I don't want to hear you speak of , because—" She stopped, she had never complained to him, not i all those years, her voice flat, she said only, "—that I don't want) hear it?"

"Because I'm the one man who has no right to speak of it? Dagny, if you think that I don't know how much I've hurt you, I'll ell you about the years when I . . . But it's over Oh, darling, it's ver!"

"Is it?"

"Forgive me, I mustn't say that. Not until you say it." He was trying to control his voice, but the look of happiness was beyond his power to control

"Are you happy because I've lost everything I lived for? All right, I'll say it, if this is what you've come to hear you were the first thing I lost—does it amuse you now to see that I've lost the rest?"

He glanced straight at her, his eyes drawn narrow by such an intensity of earnestness that the glance was almost a threat, and she knew that whatever the years had meant to him, "amusement" was the one word she had no right to utter

"Do you really think that?" he asked.

She whispered, "No . ."

"Dagny, we can never lose the things we live for We may have to change their form at times, if we've made an error, but the purpose remains the same and the forms are ours to make"

"That is what I've been telling myself for a month But there's no way left open toward any purpose whatever"

He did not answer. He sat down on a boulder by the door of the cabin, watching her as if he did not want to miss a single shadow of reaction on her face. "What do you think now of the men who quit and vanished?" he asked.

She shrugged, with a faint smile of helpless sadness, and sat down on the ground beside him "You know," she said, "I used to think that there was some destroyer who came after them and made them quit But I guess there wasn't. There have been times, this past month when I've almost wished he would come for me, too But nobody came"

'No?'

"No I used to think that he gave them some inconceivable reason to make them betray everything they loved But that wasn't necessary I know how they felt I can t blame them any longer What I don t know is how they learned to exist afterward—if any of them still exist '

'Do you feel that you've betrayed Taggart Transcontinental?"

'No I I feel that I would have betrayed it by remaining at work.'

You would have "

'If I had agreed to serve the looters, it's . it's Nat Taggart that I would have delivered to them I couldn't I couldn t let his

[illegible] final goal"

[illegible] ou think

[illegible]

[illegible] ar on the railroad [illegible] But I can t go back to it"

"Then you know what they felt, all the men who quit, and what it was that they loved when they gave up"

"Francisco," she asked not looking at him her head bent "why did you ask me whether I could have given it up twelve years ago?"

"Don t you know what night I am thinking of, just as you are?"

"Yes " she whispered

"That was the night I gave up d Anconia Copper"

Slowly with a long effort, she moved her head to glance up at him His face had the expression she had seen then, on that next [illegible] he was not [illegible] of a man's [illegible] orth paying [illegible] You're still [illegible] ung to you now"

"It means as much to me now as it did that night."

"Then how can you let it go to pieces?'

"Dagny, you re more fortunate than I Taggart Transcontinental is a delicate piece of precision machinery It will not last long without you It cannot be run by slave labor They will mercifully destroy it for you and you won t have to see it serving the looters. But copper mining is a simpler job D Anconia Copper could have lasted for generations of looters and slaves Crudely, miserably, ineptly—but it could have lasted and helped them to last I had to destroy *it myself*"

"You—what?"

"I am destroying d Anconia Copper, consciously, deliberately, by plan and by my own hand I have to plan it as carefully and work

hard as if I were producing a fortune—in order not to let them nce it and stop me in order not to let them seize the mines until s too late. All the effort and energy I had hoped to spend on Anconia Copper I m spending them only only it s not to ake it grow I shall destroy every last bit of it and every last nny of my fortune and every ounce of copper that could feed e looters I shall not leave it as I found it—I shall leave it as Sebastián d Anconia found it—then let them try to exist without m or me "

"Francisco " she screamed "How could you make yourself do it?"

"By the grace of the same love as yours," he answered quietly, my love for d Anconia Copper for the spirit of which it was the hape Was—and some day will be again "

She sat still trying to grasp all the implications of what she now grasped only as the numbness of shock. In the silence the music of the rad o symphony went on and the rhythm of the chords reached her like the slow solemn pounding of steps while she struggled to see at once the whole progression of twelve years the tortured boy who called for help on her breasts—the man who sat on the floor of a drawing room playing marbles and laughing at the destruction of great industries—the man who cried, "My love I can t!" while refusing to help her—the man who drank a toast in the d m booth of a barroom to the years which Sebastián d Anconia had had to wa t.

"Francisco of all the guesses I tried to make about you I never thought of it I never thought that you were one of

you—that

... you looking at a cheap playboy who was not the Francisco d'Anconia you had known?"

"Yes " she whispered "only the worst was that I couldn't believe it I never did It was Francisco d Anconia that I kept seeing every time I saw you "

"I know And I know what it did to you I tried to help you understand. but ...

... uction of d Anconia Copper of Taggart Transcontinental of Wyatt O l of Rearden Steel—would you have found it easier to take?"

"Harder " she whispered "I'm not sure I can take it, even now Neither your kind of renunciation nor my own But, Francisco"—she threw her head back suddenly to look up at him—"if this was your secret, then of all the hell you had to take I was—"

"Oh yes, my darling yes *you* were the worst of it! It was a despera e cry ... agony he w... mouth to it

his years had been like "If it s any kind of atonement, which i isn t whatever I made you suffer that s how I paid for it by knowing what I was doing to you and having to do it and waiting waiting to But it s over"

He raised his head smiling he looked down at her and she saw a look of protect ve tenderness come into his face which told her of the despair he saw in hers

"Dagny don t think of that I won t claim any suffering of mine as my excuse Whatever my reason I knew what I was doing to I ve hurt you terribly I ll need years to make up for it. Forget what —she knew that he meant what his embrace had confessed— 'what I haven t said Of all the things I have to tell you that's the one I ll say last But his eyes his smile the grasp of his fingers on her wrist were saying it against his will You've borne too much and there s a great deal that you have to learn to understand in order to lose every scar of the torture you never should have had to bear All that matters now is that you re free to recover We're free both of us we re free of the looters we re out of their reach"

She said her voice quietly desolate 'That s what I came here for—to try to understand But I can t It seems monstrously wrong to surrender the world to the looters and monstrously wrong to li under the r rule I can neither give up nor go back I can neither exist without work nor work as a serf I had always thought th any sort of battle was proper anything except renunciation I m n sure we re right to quit you and I when we should have fought them But there is no way to fight It s surrender if we leave—an surrender if we remain I don t know what is right any longer"

"Check your premises Dagny Contradictions don't exist"

But I can t find any answer I can t condemn you for wh you re do ng yet it s horror that I feel—admiration and horr at the same time You the heir of the d Anconias who cou have surpassed all his ancestors of the miraculous hand that pr duced you re turn [illegible] of destru tion And I—I m while a transcontir of congenital warc termine the fate o then it must have been our own guilt But I can t see the nature our error"

"Yes Dagny it *was* our own guilt"

"Because we didn t work hard enough?"

"Because we worked too hard—and charged too little"

"What do you mean?"

"We never demanded the one payment that the world owed us and we let our best reward go to the worst of men The error w made centuries ago it was made by Sebastián d Anconia, by N Taggart by every man who fed the world and received no than in return You don't know what is right any longer? Dagny t is not a battle over material goods It s a moral crisis the great the world has ever faced and the last Our age is the cl max centuries of evil We must put an end to it, once and for all

—we the men of the mind It was our own guilt We pro-
l the wealth of the world—but we let our enemies write its
l code"

ut we never accepted their code We lived by our own stand-

allowed men to despise us and to worship our destroyers We

feel that no
our enemies
destroying you by means of your own power Your generosity
d your endurance are their only tools Your unrequited rectitude

The
must
u do
that
in let

. . To
lmost

was it isn't any longer Leave it to them It won't do them
ood. Let it go We don't need it. We can rebuild it They

e is in material objects as such because we're the
who create their value and meaning We can afford to give
up for a short while, in order to redeem something much
precious We are the soul, of which railroads, copper mines,
mills and oil wells are the body—and they are living entities
beat day and night like our hearts, in the sacred function of
orting human life, but only so long as they remain our body,
so long as they remain the expression, the reward and the
erty of achievement. Without us, they are corpses and their
product is poison, not wealth or food, the poison of disintegra
that turns men into hordes of scavengers Dagny, learn to un
tand the nature of your own power and you'll understand the
idox you now see around you. *You* do not have to depend on
material possessions, they depend on you, you create them,

you own the one and only tool of production. Wherever you are, you will always be able to produce But the looters—by their own stated theory—are in desperate, permanent, congenital need and at the blind mercy of matter Why don't you take them at their word? They need railroads, factories, mines, motors, which they cannot

without you

it, time and

Who fed the

m the mean

to enslave you? The impossible spectacle of shabby little incompetents holding control over the products of genius—who made it possible? Who supported your enemies, who forged your chains, who destroyed your achievement?

The motion that threw her upright was like a silent cry He sho to his feet with the stored abruptness of a spring uncoiling his voic driving on in merciless triumph

"You're beginning to see, aren't you? Dagny! Leave them th carcass of that railroad leave them all the rusted rails and rotte ties and gutted engines—but don't leave them your mind! Don leave them your mind! The fate of the world rests on that decision!

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the panic pregnant voice of a radi

"we interru

him through the rest of the broadcast—as they both ran to t

yes staring at t

uke Beal, firem was found unc scious at the western portal of the tunnel this morning and w appears to be the sole survivor of the catastrophe Through so astounding infraction of safety rules—in circumstances not yet fu established—the Comet, westbound for San Francisco, was sent i the tunnel with a coal-burning steam locomotive The Taggart T nel an eight mile bore, cut through the summit of the Rocky Mo

to be equa

tunnel with such a locomotive would mean death by suffocation everyone aboard The Comet, none the less was so ordered to p ceed According to Fireman Beal, the effects of the fumes be to be felt when the train was about three miles inside the tun Engineer Joseph Scott threw the throttle wide open in a desper attempt to gain speed, but the old, worn engine was inadequate

weight of the long train and the rising grade of the track Strug-
g through the thickening fumes, engineer and fireman had barely
aged to force the leaking steam boilers up to a speed of forty
es per hour—when some passenger, prompted undoubtedly by
[illegible] the emergency brake cord The sudden
[illegible] or the train
[illegible] g from the
Passengers were breaking windows [illegible] S tt struggled
ntically to make the engine start, but collapsed at the throttle,
rcome by the fumes Fireman Beal leaped from the engine and
He was within sight of the western portal, when he heard the
st of the explosion, which is the last thing he remembers The
of the story was gathered from railroad employees at Winston
[illegible]

[illegible] of order It is said
requent break-
om of all engi-

[illegible]

of the Comet The explosion of the Special's cargo [illegible]
windows in a farmhouse five miles away and brought down such a
weight of rock upon the tunnel that rescue parties have not yet been
able to come within three miles of where either train had been
t is not expected that any survivors will be found—and it is not
believed that the Taggart Tunnel can ever be rebuilt"

She stood still She looked as if she were seeing, not the room
[illegible]

the only object in existence, she seized it, she whirled to the [illegible]
and ran

"Dagny!" he screamed. "Don't go back!"

The scream had no more power to reach her than if he were calling to her across the miles between him and the mountains of Colorado

He ran after her, he caught her, seizing her by both elbows, and he cried, "Don't go back! Dagny! In the name of anything sacred to you don't—
[illegible] a contest of
[illegible] her arms w[illegible]
[illegible] hing for

she tore herself loose so violently that she threw him off balan
for a moment When he regained his footing, she was running dow
the hill—running as he had run at the sound of the alarm siren
Rearden s mills—running to her car on the road below

* *

His letter of resignation lay on the desk before him—and Jame
Taggart sat staring at it hunched by hatred He felt as if his enem
were this piece of paper, not the words on it but the sheet and th
ink that had given the words a material finality He had always re
garded thought and words as inconclusive, but a material shape wa
that which he had spent his life escaping a commitment

He had not decided to resign—not really, he thought, he had dic
tated the letter for a motive which he identified to himself only a
"just in case The letter he felt, was a form of protection but he
had not signed it
tion. The hatred
that he would no
longer

He had received word of the catastrophe at eight o clock this
morning, by noon, he had arrived at his office An instinct that came
from reasons which he knew but spent his whole effort on not
knowing had told him that he had to be there, this time

The men who had been his marked cards—in a game he knew
how to play—were gone Clifton Locey was barricaded behind the
statement of a doctor who had announced that Mr Locey was suffer
ing from a heart condition which made it impossible to disturb him
at present One of Taggart s executive assistants was said to have
left for Boston last night, and the other was sa d to have been called

could not be found

Driving through the streets to his office, Taggart had seen the
black letters of the headlines Walking down the corridors of Tag
gart Transcontinental, he had heard the voice of a speaker pouring
from a radio in someone's office, the kind of voice one expects to
hear on unlighted street corners

busy and to tell all comers that Mr Taggart was

He had to be here hoping that the lock would hold out for eternity
sit idly and
to determine

ıe for him and of the fact that nobody came, nobody to tell him ıt to do

he ringing of the telephones in the outer office sounded like ıams for help He looked at the door with a sensation of malenıt triumph at the thought of all those voices being defeated by innocuous fig re of h secretary [illegible]

[illegible]

near them

His emotions had clogged into a still solid, opaque ball within ı, which the thought of the men who operated the Taggart system ıld not pierce, those men were merely enemies to be outwitted. : sharper bites of fear came from the thought of the men on the ırd of Directors, but his letter of resignation was his fire escape, ıch would leave them stuck with the fire The sharpest fear came m the thought of the men in Washington If they called, he would ıe to answer, his rubber secretary would know whose voices ıerseded his orders But Washington did not call

The fear went through him in spasms, once in a while leaving his ıth dry He did not know what he dreaded He knew that it was ! the threat of the radio speaker What he had experienced at sound of the snarling voice had been more like a terror which he [illegible]

[illegible]

ıger, but neither would anyone else neither would anyone e. . . .

He sat, looking down at his desk, keeping his eyes and his mind ! of focus It was as if he were immersed in a pool of fog strugıng not to let it reach the finality of any form That which exists ssesses identity, he could keep it out of existence by refusing to ıntify it.

He did not examine the events in Colorado he did not attempt grasp the [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] screaming of the telephones went on through the s [illegible]
ıew that the [illegible]

bells The solid ball exploded within him and flung him blindly into action

Rushing out of the room in defiance of all the faces around him, he went running down the halls to the Operating Department and into the anteroom of the Operating Vice-President's office

The door to the office was open he saw the sky in the great win- dows beyond an empty desk. Then he saw the staff in the anteroom around him and the blond head of Eddie Willers in the glass cubby- hole He walked purposefully straight toward Eddie Willers, he flung the glass door open and from the threshold, in the sight and hearing of the room he screamed

"Where is she?

Eddie Willers rose slowly to his feet and stood looking at Taggart with an odd kind of dutiful curiosity as if this were one more phenomenon to observe among all the unprecedented things he had observed He did not answer

Where is she?

I cannot tell you"

"Listen you stubborn little punk this is no time for ceremony! If you're trying to make me believe that you don't know where she is, I don't believe you! You know it and you're going to tell me, or I'll report you to the Unification Board! I'll swear to them that you know it—then try and prove that you don't!"

There was a faint tone of astonishment in Eddie's voice as he answered, I've never attempted to imply that I don't know where she is Jim I know it But I won't tell you

Taggart's scream rose to the shrill impotent sound that confesse a miscalculation Do you realize what you're saying?"

Why yes of course

"Will you repeat it"—he waved at the room—"for these wit- nesses?"

Eddie raised his voice a little more in precision and clarity than in volume "I know where she is But I will not tell you"

"Y [illegible] his aiding a[illegible]

[illegible] n't you kno

that?"

No"

"It's against the law!"

"Yes"

"This is a national emergency! You have no right to any private secrets! You're withholding vital information! I'm the President of this railroad! I'm ordering you to tell me! You can't refuse to obey an order! It's a penitentiary offense! Do you understand?"

"Yes"

"Do you refuse?"

"I do"

Years of training had made Taggart able to watch any audience around him, without appearing to do so He saw the tight, closed faces of the staff faces that were not his allies All had a look of

despair, except the face of Eddie Willers, The "feudal serf" of Taggart Transcontinental was the only one who seemed untouched by the disaster He looked at Taggart with the lifelessly conscientious glance of a scholar confronted by a field of knowledge he had never wanted to study,

"Do you realize that you're a traitor?" yelled Taggart.

[illegible]

onomic

nything

know

Don't you see that I don't give a damn about that?'

"Oh you don't? I'll quote that to the Unification Board! I have all these witnesses to prove that you said—"

"Don't bother about witnesses, Jim Don't put them on the spot. I'll write down everything I said, I'll sign it, and you can take it to the Board"

The sudden explosion of Taggart's voice sounded as if he had been slapped "Who are *you* to stand against the government? Who are you, you miserable little office rat, to judge national policies and hold opinions of your own? Do you think the country has time to bother about your opinions, your wishes or your precious little conscience? You're going to learn a lesson—all of you!—all of you spoiled self indulgent, undisciplined little two-bit clerks who strut as if that crap about your rights was serious! You're going to learn that these are not the days of Nat Taggart!'

Eddie said nothing For an instant, they stood looking at each other [illegible] tested by terror Eddie's

[illegible]

what do we care whether she wants to work or not! We need her

"Do you, Jim?"

An impulse pertaining to self preservation made Taggart back a step away from the sound of that particular tone, a very quiet tone, in the voice of Eddie Willers But Eddie made no move to follow He remained standing behind his desk, in a manner suggesting the civilized tradition of a business office

"You [illegible] back. I'm glad she

[illegible]

persons in her eyes, the glance merely swept through the room

if making a swift inventory of physical objects Her face was not th face they remembered, it had aged, not by means of lines, but by means of a still, naked look stripped of any quality save ruthlessness

Yet their first response, ahead of shock or wonder, was a single emotion that went through the room like a gasp of relief It was on all their faces but one, Eddie Willers, who alone had been calm a moment ago, collapsed with his face down on his desk, he made no sound, but the movements of his shoulders were sobs

Her face gave no sign of acknowledgment to anyone no greeting as if her presence here were inevitable and no words were necessary She went straight to the door of her office, passing the desk of her secretary, she said her voice like the sound of a business machine neither rude nor gentle "Ask Eddie to come in"

James Taggart was the first one to move, as if dreading to let her out of his sight He rushed in after her, he cried, 'I couldn't help it!" and then life returning to him, his own, his normal kind of life he screamed, It s was *your* fault! You did it! You're to blame for it Because you left!"

He wondered whether his scream had been an illusion inside his own ears Her face remained blank, yet she had turned to him, she looked as if sounds had reached her, but not words, not the com ... was his closest

... the indication of perceiving a human presence, but she was looking past him and he turned and saw that Eddie Willers had entered the office

There were traces of tears in Eddie's eyes, but he made no attempt to hide them ... embarrassment

... n let ... rail ... ud, his ... k."

... they did not notice Taggart ... the f rniture

... his letter of resignation.

She did not notice his exit, she was looking at Eddie "Is Knowland here?" she asked

"No He's gone"

"Andrews?'

"Gone"

"McGuire?"

"Gone"

He went on quietly to recite the list of those he knew she would ask for, those most needed in this hour, who had resigned and vanished within the past month She listened without astonishment

or emotion, as one listens to the casualty list of a battle where all re doomed and it makes no difference whose names fall first

When he finished, she made no comment, but asked, "What has een done since this morning?"

"Nothing"

"Nothing?"

"Dagny, any office boy could have issued orders here since this norning and everybody would have obeyed him But even the office oys know that whoever makes the first move today will be held reponsible for the future, the present and the past—when the buckassing begins He would not save the system, he would merely lose is job by the time he saved one division. Nothing has been done t's stopped still Whatever is moving, is moving on anyone's blind uess—out on the line where they don't know whether they're to nove or to stop Some trains are held at stations, others are going n, waiting to be stopped before they reach Colorado It's whatever he local dispatchers decide The Terminal manager downstairs has ancelled all transcontinental traffic for today, including tonight's Comet. I don't know what the manager in San Francisco is doing Only the wrecking crews are working At the tunnel They haven't ome anywhere near the wreck as yet I don't think they will"

"Phone the Terminal manager downstairs and tell him to put all ranscontinental trains back on the schedule at once, including toight's Comet Then come back here"

When he came back, she was bending over the maps she had pread on a table, and she spoke while he made rapid notes

'Route all westbound trains south from Kirby, Nebraska, down he spur track to Hastings, down the track of the Kansas Western o Laurel, Kansas, then to the track of the Atlantic Southern at Jasper, Oklahoma West on the Atlantic Southern to Flagstaff, Arizona, north on the track of the Flagstaff Homedale to Elgin, Jtah, north to Midland, northwest on the track of the Wasatch Railway to Salt Lake City The Wasatch Railway is an abandoned narrow gauge Buy it. Have the gauge spread to standard If the

wice the legal wages, three times anything they ask—put three hifts on—and have the job done overnight. For rail, tear up the idings at Winston Colorado, at Silver Springs, Colorado at Leeds, Utah, at Benson, Nevada. If any local stooges of the Unification Board come to stop the work—give authority to our local men, the ones you trust, to bribe them Don't put that through the Accounting Department, charge it to me, I'll pay it If they find some case where it doesn't work, have them tell the stooge that Directive

"How do I know? How can anybody know? But by the time they untangle it and decide whatever it is they please to decide—our track will be built"

"I see"

"I'll go over the lists and give you the names of our local men to put in charge—if they're still there By the time tonight's Comet reaches Kirby, Nebraska, the track will be ready It will add about thirty-six hours to the transcontinental schedule—but there will be a transcontinental schedule Then have them get for me out of the files the old maps of our road as it was before Nat Taggart's grand son built the tunnel"

"The what?' He did not raise his voice, but the catch of his breath was the break of emotion he had wanted to avoid

Her face did not change, but a faint note in her voice acknowledged him, a note of gentleness, not reproof "The old maps of the days before the tunnel We're going back, Eddie Let's hope we can. No, we won't rebuild the tunnel There's no way to do it now But the old grade that crossed the Rockies is still there It can be reclaimed Only it will be hard to get the rail for it and the men to do it Particularly the men"

He knew, as he had known from the first, that she had seen his tears and that she had not walked past in indifference, even though her clear, toneless voice and unmoving face gave him no sign of feeling There was some quality in her manner, which he sensed but [illegible] was as if [illegible]

cover that there is no air to breathe

"We have today and tomorrow to get things started," she said "I'll leave for Colorado tomorrow night."

"If you want to fly, I'll have to rent a plane for you somewhere Yours is still in the shops, they can t get the parts for it"

'No, I'll go by rail I have to see the line I'll take tomorrow's Comet"

It was two hours later, in a brief pause between long-distance phone calls, that she asked him suddenly the first question which did not pertain to the railroad 'What have they done to Hank Rearden?'

Eddie caught himself in the small evasion of looking away, forced his glance back to meet hers, and answered, "He gave in He signed [illegible] s merely a [illegible] act. "Have [illegible]

"He sent no letter or message for me?"

"No"

He guessed the thing she feared and it reminded him of a matter [illegible] had not reported "Dagny, there s another problem that s been

; all over the system since you left. Since May first It's the trains "

what?"

ney try to go on and then they suddenly reach a moment when an t take it any longer What can we do about it?" He shrugged. 'ell, who is John Galt?"

: nodded thoughtfully, she did not look astonished

: telephone rang and the voice of her secretary said, "Mr. y Mouch calling from Washington, Miss Taggart."

r lips stiffened a little, as at the unexpected touch of an insect. ust be for my brother," she said.

o Miss Taggart For you"

ll right. Put him on"

Miss Taggart," said the voice of Wesley Mouch in the tone of a tail-party host, "I was so glad to hear you've regained your h that I wanted to welcome you back in person I know that health required a long rest and I appreciate the patriotism that e you cut your leave of absence short in this terrible emergency anted to assure you that you can count on our co-operation in step you now find it necessary to take Our fullest co-operation, stance and support If there are any . special exceptions you ht require, please feel certain that they can be granted"

he let him speak, even though he had made several small pauses iting an answer When his pause became long enough she said, would be much obliged if you would let me speak to Mr atherby"

"Why, of course, Miss Taggart, any time you wish why it is . do you mean, *now?*"

"Yes Right now"

He understood. But he said, "Yes, Miss Taggart."

When Mr Weatherby's voice came on the wire it sounded cau- ous "Yes, Miss Taggart? Of what service can I be to you?"

"You can tell your boss that if he doesn't want me to quit again he knows I did, he is never to call me or speak to me Anything our gang has to tell me, let them send *you* to tell it I'll speak to ou, but not to him You may tell him that my reason is what he id to Hank Rearden when he was on Rearden's payroll If every ody else h . .

at any time Miss trying to avoid the but a sudden note thoughtfully with Taggart, that it is

a few tall buildings still rose above it, like funnels, but the rest was

same longing

She felt—as she had felt it one spring night, slumped across her desk in the crumbling office of the John Galt Line, by a window facing a dark alley—the sense and vision of her own world, which she would never reach You—she thought—whoever you are whom I have always loved and never found you whom I expected

love and my hope to reach you and my wish to be worthy of you on the day when I would stand before you face to face Now I know that I shall never find you—that it is not to be reached or lived—but what is left of my life is still yours, and I will go on in your name even though it is a name I'll never learn, I will go on serving you even though I'm never to win, I will go on, to be worthy of you on the day when I would have met you even though I won't

She had never accepted hopelessness, but she stood at the window and, addressed to the shape of a fogbound city, it was her self dedication to unrequited love

The doorbell rang

She turned with indifferent astonishment to open the door—but she knew that she should have expected him when she saw that it was Francisco d'Anconia She felt no shock and no rebellion, only the cheerless serenity of her assurance—and she raised her head to face him with a slow deliberate movement, as if telling him that she had chosen her stand and that she stood in the open

action, as she had once expected him to look—he had never seemed so attractive as he did in this moment—and she noted in astonishment, her sudden feeling that he was not a man who had deserted her but a man whom she had deserted

"Dagny are you able to talk about it now?"

"Yes—if you wish Come in"

He glanced briefly at her living room, her home which he had never entered then his eyes came back to her He was watching her attentively He seemed to know that the quiet simplicity of her manner was the worst of all signs for his purpose that it was like a spread of ashes where no flicker of pain could be revived, that eve

"I don't think I can stop you now," he said "if you've made your nce But if theres one chance left to stop you, its a chance I e to take."

She shook her head slowly "There isn't And—what for Fran o? You've given up What difference does it make to you whether erish with the railroad or away from it?"

"I haven't given up the future"

"What future?"

"The day when the looters will perish, but we wont"

"If Taggart Transcontinental is to perish with the looters, then so I."

He did not take his eyes off her face and he did not answer

ept what theyre all accepting—Francisco its the thing we ught so monstrous, you and I!—the belief that disasters are ones ural fate, to be borne, not fought I cant accept submission I 't accept helplessness I cant accept renunciation. So long as

loves ones work I what it means to you, the job of running trains But you would run them if they were empty Dagny, what is it you see when think of a moving train?"

She glanced at the city "The life of a man of ability who might e perished in that catastrophe but will escape the next one which prevent—a man who has an intransigent mind and an unlimited ition, and is in love with his own life the kind of man who what we were when we started you and I You gave him up n't."

He closed his eyes for an instant, and the tightening movement is mouth was a smile, a smile substituting for a moan of under ding.

"All right, Dagny I wont try to stop you So long as you still k that, nothing can stop you, or should You will stop on the day n you'll discover that your work has been placed in the service, of that mans life, but of his destruction"

"Francisco!" It was a cry of astonishment and despair "You do erstand it, you know what I mean by that kind of man, you see , too!"

Oh yes"

"Yes," she said sternly, "one of us has. We cannot serve him
renunciation "

"We cannot serve him by making terms with his destroyers."

"I'm not making terms with them They need me They know i
It's *my* terms that I'll make them accept "

'By playing a game in which they gain benefits in exchange fo
harming you?'

If I can keep Taggart T
benefit
them h

He sr
is your
want? No, you won t quit until you see, of your own sight an
judgment, what it is that they really want. You know, Dagny, w
were taught that
Perhaps their
ing—he does
between your
your actions, no tributes to Caesar He permits no Caesars"

"For twelve years,' she said softly, "I would have thought it in
conceivable that there might come a day when I would have to be
your forgiveness on my knees Now I think it's possible If I com
to see that you re right, I will But not until then."

"You will But not on your knees "

He was looking at her, as if he were seeing her body as she stoo
before him even though his eyes were directed at her face, and h
glance told her what form of atonement and surrender he wa
seeing in the future She saw the effort he made to look away, h
hope that she had not seen his glance or understood it, his s
struggle, betrayed by the tension of a few muscles under the sk
of his face—the face she knew so well

"Until then, Dagny, remember that we're enemies I didn't wa
to tell you this but you re the first person who almost stepped int
heaven and came back to earth You've glimpsed too much, so yo
have to know this clearly It's you that I'm fighting not your brothe
James or Wesley Mouch It's you that I have to defeat I am o
to end all the things that are most precious to you right now Whil
you'll struggle to save Taggart Transcontinental, I will be worki
to destroy it Don't ever ask me for help or money You know m
reasons Now you may hate me—as, from your stand, you should."

She raised her head a little, there was no perceptible change i
her posture, it was no more than her awareness of her own body an

concern but mine, he answered

It was she who weakened, but realized, while saying it, that th
was still more *cruel* "I don't hate you I've tried to, for years, but I
ever will, no matter what we do, either one of us."

"I know it," he said, his voice low, so that she did not hear the n, but felt it within herself as if by direct reflection from him

"Francisco!" she cried, in desperate defense of him against herself.

aan,"
will

nowl-
gment.

oing to go through," he
not me that you should
travel that road by his

where does it lead?

He smiled, as if softly closing a door on the questions that he could not answer. "To Atlantis," he said

"What?" she asked, startled

"Don't you remember?—the lost city that only the spirits of heroes can enter."

The connection that struck her suddenly had been struggling in

hape of the enemy she was facing

"*You're* one of them," she said slowly, 'aren't you?"

"Of whom?"

"Was it *you* in Ken Danagger's office?"

He smiled. "No" But she noted that he did not ask what she meant.

"Is there—you would know it—is there actually a destroyer loose in the world?"

"Of course"

"Who is it?"

"You"

She shrugged, her face was growing hard "The men who've quit, are they *still* alive or dead?'

there's to be a

r to
ords.

I'll always wait for you, no matter what we do, either one of us"

The sound they heard was the turning of a key in the lock of the entrance door The door opened and Hank Rearden came in.

He stopped briefly on the threshold, then walked slowly into the living room, his hand slipping the key into his pocket.

She knew that he had seen Francisco's face before he had seen hers. He glanced at her, but his eyes came back to Francisco, as if this were the only face he was now able to see

It was at Francisco's face that she was afraid to look. The

she made to pull her glance along the curve of a few steps felt as she were pulling a weight beyond her power Francisco had risen to his feet, as if in the unhurried, automatic manner of a d'Anconia trained to the code of courtesy There was nothing that Rearden could see in his face But what she saw in it was worse than she had feared

"What are you doing here?" asked Rearden, in the tone one would use to address a menial caught in a drawing room.

"I see that I have no right to ask you the same question," said Francisco She knew what effort was required to achieve the clear toneless quality of his voice His eyes kept returning to Rearden's right hand, as if he were still seeing the key between his fingers.

"Then answer it ' said Rearden

"Hank, any questions you wish to ask should be asked of me," she said

Rearden did not seem to see or hear her "*Answer it*," he repeated

"There is only one answer which you would have the right to demand,' said Francisco "so I will answer you that that is not the reason of *my presence* here "

"Th...

won...

conc...

your ... you ever said to me?

"I have given you grounds not to trust me, but none to include Miss Taggart '

'*Don't tell* me that you have no chance here, never had and never will I know it But that I should find you here on the first—"

"*Hank*, if you wish to accuse me—" she began, but Rearden whirled to her

"God, no Dagny I don't! But you shouldn't be seen speaking to him *You shouldn't* deal with him in any way You don't know him I do ' He turned to Francisco "What are you after? Are you hoping *to include* her among your kind of conquests or—"

"*No!* It was an involuntary cry and it sounded futile, with its passionate sincerity offered—to be rejected—as its only proof

"No? Then are you here on a matter of business? Are you setting a trap, as you did for me? What sort of double-cross are you preparing for her?"

"My purpose was not . . . a matter of business."

"Then what was it?"

"If you still care to believe me, I can tell you only that it involved no betrayal of any kind "

"Do you think that you may still discuss betrayal, in my presence?"

"I will answer you some day I cannot answer you now "

...

fron...

didn...

as n...

his.

owing t

be the one to answer,"

n again," said Rearden
oncern you, but there's

... your purpose," Francisco said with effort, "haven't

-n, his lips barely
"Is this your way

a greater effort.

"Did you grant it when you held my future in your hands?"

"You are justified in anything you wish to think of me But since doesn't concern Miss Taggart . . would you now permit me to leave?"

"No! Do you want to evade it, like all those other cowards? Do you want to escape?"

"I will come anywhere you require any time you wish But I would rather it were not in Miss Taggart's presence"

"Why not? I want it to be in her presence since this is the one place you had no right to come I have nothing left to protect from you, you've taken more than the looters can ever take, you've destroyed everything you've touched, but here is one thing you're not going to touch" He knew that the rigid absence of emotion in Francisco's face was the strongest evidence of emotion the evidence of some abnormal effort at control—he knew that this was torture and that ...

unable to tell

're worse than
g of that which
uption is your
gs beyond your

reach, beyond your aspiration or your malice now"

"You have nothing to fear from me"

"I want you to learn that you are not to think of her, not to look at her, not to approach her Of all men, it's you who're not to appear in her presence" He knew that he was driven by a desperate a at his own feeling for this man, that the feeling still lived was this feeling which he had to outrage and destroy your motive, it's from any contact with you that she has tected."

'If I gave you my word—" He stopped

Rearden chuckled 'I know what they mean your words, your convictions your friendship and your oath by the only woman you ever— He stopped They all knew what this meant, in the same instant that Rearden knew it

Francisco closed his eyes

Don t ask him that! The cry was Dagny's

"Is this the woman you love?'

Francisco answered looking at her 'Yes"

Rearden s hand rose swept down and slapped Francisco's face.

The scream came from Dagny When she could see again—after an instant that felt as if the blow had struck her own cheek—Francisco s hands were the first thing she saw The heir of th

cles as a tearing pain She saw his convulsed fingers struggling grow fast to the table s edge she wondered which would bre first the wood of the table or the bones of the man and she kn that Rearden s life hung in the balance

When her
struggle, only
his cheeks dr
It made his f
she was seeing in his eyes the tears which were not there His e were brilliant and dry He was looking at Rearden but it was Rearden that he was seeing He looked as if he were facing anot presence in the room and as if his glance were saying If this is w you demand of me then even this is yours, yours to accept and m to endure, there is no more than this in me to offer you, but let be proud to know that I can offer so much She saw—with a sm artery beating under the skin of his throat, with a froth of pink the corner of his mouth—the look of an enraptured dedicat which was almost a smile and she knew that she was witness Francisco d Anconia s greatest achievement

When she felt herself shaking and heard her own voice it seem to meet the last echo of her scream in the air of the room—and realized how brief a moment had passed between Her voice had savage sound of rising to deliver a blow and it was crying to Re den

"—to protect me from *him?* Long before you ever—"

"Don t! Francisco s head jerked to her, the brief snap of his vo

held all of h... ...at ... and she knew it was an order

...within the extent of your knowledge," Francisco said quietly, "you are right."

Neither expecting nor permitting an answer, he turned to leave. He bowed to Dagny, inclining his head in a manner that appeared as a simple gesture of leave-taking to Rearden, as a gesture of acceptance to her. Then he left.

Rearden stood looking after him, knowing—without context and with absolute certainty—that he would give his life for the power not to have committed the action he had committed.

When he turned to Dagny, his face looked drained, open and ... er about the words ... ome ... ended in the move- ... r which of the two ... iable to speak and she ... trying desperately to ... ad made them all its

"If there's something that must be said, say it." His voice was toneless.

The sound she made was half-chuckle, half moan—it was not a desire for vengeance, but a desperate sense of justice that drove the cutting bitterness of her voice, as she cried, consciously throwing the words at his face, "You wanted to know the name of that other man? The man I slept with? The man who had me first? It was Francisco d'Anconia!"

She saw the force of the blow by seeing his face swept blank. She knew that if justice was her purpose she had achieved it—because his slap was worse than the one he had dealt.

She felt suddenly calm, knowing that her words had had to be said for the sake of all three of them. The despair of a helpless victim left her, she was not a victim any longer, she was one of the contestants, willing to bear the responsibility of action. She stood facing him, waiting for any answer he would choose to give her, feeling almost as if it were her turn to be subjected to violence.

She did not know what form of torture he was enduring or what he saw being wrecked within him and kept himself the only one to see. There was no sign of pain to give her any warning; he looked as if he were just a man who stood still in the middle of a room, making his consciousness absorb a fact that it refused to absorb. Then she noticed th... ...s h.s hands hung

by ...

im...

blo...

suffering she was able to find, but it told her that that which he f[illegible] left him no power to feel anything else, not even the existence of his own body She waited, her pity vanishing and becoming respect

Then she saw his eyes move slowly from her face down the length of her body, and she knew the sort of torture he was now choosing to experience because it was a glance of a nature he could not hide from her She knew that he was seeing her as she had been at seventeen, he was seeing her with the rival he hated, he was seeing them together as they would be now, a sight he could neither endure nor resist She saw the protection of control dropping from his face, but [illegible]

He seized her shoulders, and she felt prepared to accept that he would now kill her or beat her into unconsciousness, and in the moment when she felt certain that he had thought of it, she felt her body thrown against him and his mouth falling on hers, more brutally than the act of a beating would have permitted

She found herself in terror, twisting her body to resist, and, in exultation twisting her arms around him holding him, letting her lips bring blood to his, knowing that she had never wanted him as she did in this moment

When he threw her down on the couch she knew, to the rhythm of the beat of his body that it was the act of his victory over his rival and of his surrender to him the act of ownership brought to unendurable violence by the thought of the man whom it was defying the act of transforming his hatred for the pleasure that man had known into the intensity of his own pleasure, his conquest of that man by means of her body—she felt Francisco's presence through Pearden s mind she felt as if she were surrendering to both men to that which she had worshipped in both of them, that which they held in common that essence of character which had made of her love for each an act of loyalty to both She knew also that this was his rebellion against the world around them, against its worship of degradation against the long torment of his wasted days and light less struggle—this was what he wished to assert and, alone with her in the half-darkness high in space above a city of ruins, to hold as the last of his property

Afterwards they lay still, his face on her shoulder The reflection of a distant electric sign kept beating in faint flashes on the ceiling above her head

He reached for her hand and slipped her fingers under his face t[illegible] let his mouth rest against her palm for a moment, so gently that she felt his motive more than his touch

After a while she got up, she reached for a cigarette, lighted it then held it out to him with a slight, questioning lift of her hand he nodded still sitting half-stretched on the couch, she placed the cigarette between his lips and lighted another for herself She felt a great sense of peace between them, and the intimacy of the unimportant gestures underscored the importance of the things they we[illegible]

not saying to each other Everything was said, she thought—but

while and

the man

me have the

great deal to you, didn't he?"

"He does"

The two dots of fire at the tips of their cigarettes had moved slowly to the tips of their fingers, with the small glow of an occasional flare and the soft crumbling of ashes as sole movement in the silence, when the doorbell rang They knew that it was not the man they wished but could not hope to see return, and she frowned with sudden anger as she went to open the door It took her a moment to remember that the innocuously courteous figure she saw bowing to her with a standard smile of welcome was the assistant manager of the apartment house

"Good evening, Miss Taggart. We're so glad to see you back. I just came on duty and heard that you had returned and wanted to greet you in person"

"Thank you" She stood at the door, not moving to admit him.

"I have a letter that came for you about a week ago, Miss Taggart," he said, reaching into his pocket "It looked as if it might be important, but being marked 'personal,' it was obviously not intended to be sent to your office and, besides, they did not know your address, either—so not knowing where to forward it, I kept it in our safe and I thought I'd deliver it to you in person

The envelope he handed to her was marked Registered—Air Mail—Special Delivery—Personal The return address said Quentin Daniels, Utah Institute of Technology, Afton, Utah.

"Oh . . . Thank you"

The assistant manager noted that her voice went dropping toward a whisper, the polite disguise for a gasp, he noted that she stood looking down at the sender's name much longer than was necessary, so he repeated his good wishes and departed

She was tearing the envelope open as she walked toward Rearden, and she stopped in the middle of the room to read the letter It was typewritten on thin paper—he could see the black rectangles of the paragraphs through the transparent sheets—and he could see her face as she read them

He expected it, by the time he saw her come to the end she leaped to the telephone, he heard the violent whirl of the dial and her voice saying with trembling urgency, "Long-distance please — Operator, get me the Utah Institute of Technology at Afton, Utah!"

He asked, approaching, "What is it?"

She extended the letter, not looking at him, her eyes fixed on the telephone, as if she could force it to answer.

The letter said.

Dear Miss Taggart

I have fought it out for three weeks, I did not want to do it, I know how this will hit you and I know every argument you could offer me because I have used them all against myself—but this is to tell you that I am quitting

I cannot work under the terms of Directive 10 289—though not for the reasons its perpetrators intended I know that their abolition of all scientific research does not mean a damn to you or me, and that you would want me to continue But I have to quit, because I do not wish to succeed any longer

I do not wish to work in a world that regards me as a slave I do not wish to be of any value to people If I succeeded in
[illegible]
ry-
ng
to

expropriate the motor And for the sake of that prospect, we have to accept the position of criminals, you and I, and live under the threat of being arrested at any moment at their whim. And *this* is the thing that I cannot take, even were I able to *take all* the rest that in order to give them an inestimable benefit, we should be made martyrs to the men who, but for us, could not have conceived of it I might have forgiven the rest, but when I think of this, I say May they be damned, I will see them all die of starvation, myself included, rather than forgive them for this or permit it!

To tell you the full truth, I want to succeed to solve the secret of the motor as much as ever So I shall continue to work on it for my own sole pleasure and for as long as I last. But if I solve it, it will remain my private secret. I will not release it for any commercial use Therefore, I cannot take your money any longer [illegible]
spicable, so
sion, and I—.

I don t kn

future For the moment I intend to remain in my job at this Institute But if any of its trustees or receivers should remind *me that I am* now legally forbidden to cease being a janitor, I will quit

You had given me my greatest chance and if I am now giving you a painful blow perhaps I should ask you to forgive me I think that you love your work as much as I loved mine, so you will know that my decision was not easy to make, but that I had *to make it*

It is a strange feeling—writing this letter I do not intend to die but I am giving up the world and this feels like the letter of a suicide So I want to say that of all the people I have known, you are the only person I regret leaving behind

Sincerely yours,
Quentin Daniels

When he looked up from the letter he heard her saying as he
. . . . of he typewritten lines her voice

keep ringing!"

"There are no arguments to offer"

"I won't have a chance to tell him! Hes gone by now It was a week ago I m sure hes gone They've got him"

"Who got him?

ngs attached
I ll promise
e succeeds I
me its secret.

"If we re free

"All I want from him now is that he doesn t give up and vanish like like all those others I don t want to let them get him. If its not too late—oh God I don t want them to get him! Yes Operator, keep ringing!

"What good will it do us even if he continues to work?

"That s all I ll beg him to do—just to continue Maybe we'll never et a chance to use the motor in the future But I want to know hat somewhere in the world there s still a great bra n at work on a reat attempt—and that we still have a chance at a future f that motor is abandoned *again* then there s nothing but Starnes ille ahead of us

"Yes I know"

She held the receiver pressed to her ear her arm st ff with the effort not to tremble She waited and he heard in the silence the futile clicking of the unanswered call

"Hes gone" she said. "They got him A week is much longer than they need I don t know how they learn when the time is right but this"—she pointed at the letter—"this was their time and they wouldn t have missed it."

"Who?"

"The destroyer s agents"

"Are you beginning to think that they really exist?"

"Yes"

"Are you serious?"

"I am I've met one of them"

"Who?"

"I'll tell you later I don t know who their leader is but I m going to find out, one of these days I m going to find out. I'll be damned if I let them—"

She broke off on a gasp he saw the change in her face the moment before he heard the click of a distant receiver being lifted and the sound of a man s voice saying, across the wire "Hello?"

"Daniels! Is that *you*? You re alive? You're still there?"

"Why, yes. Is this you, Miss Taggart? What s the matter?"

"I   I thought you were gone."

'Oh, I m sorry, I just heard the phone ringing, I was out in the back lot, gathering carrots "

"Carrots?" She was laughing with hysterical relief

"I have my own vegetable patch out there Used to be the Institute s parking lot Are you calling from New York, Miss Taggart?"

"Yes I just received your letter Just now I . . . I had been away "

'Oh " There was a pause, then he said quietly, "There's really nothing more to be said about it, Miss Taggart."

"Tell me, are you going away?"

"No "

"You re not planning to go?"

"No Where?'

"Do you intend to remain at the Institute?"

'Yes "

"For how long? Indefinitely?"

"Yes—as far as I know "

'Has anyone approached you?"

"About what?"

"About leaving "

"No Who?"

"Listen, Daniels, I won t try to discuss your letter over the phone But I must speak to you I m coming to see you I ll get there as fast as I can."

"I don t want you to do that, Miss Taggart. I don't want you to go to such an effort, when it s useless."

"Give me a chance, won t you? You don't have to promise to change your mind, you don't have to commit yourself to anything —only to give me a hearing If I want to come, it s my risk, I m taking it. There are things I want to say to you, I m asking you only for the chance to say them "

"You know that I will always give you that chance, Miss Taggart "

"I m leaving for Utah at once Tonight. But there's one thing I want you to promise me Will you promise to wait for me? Will you promise to be there when I arrive?"

"Why   of course, Miss Taggart. Unless I die or something happens outside my power—but I don't expect it to happen."

"Unless you die, you will wait for me no matter what happens?"

"Of course "

"Do you give me your word that you'll wait?"

"Eddie?   Have them hold the Comet for me   . Yes, *tonight's* Comet. Give orders to have my car attached, then come here, to my place, at once " She glanced at her watch. "It s eight twelve. I

have an hour to make it. I don't think I'll hold them up too long I'll talk to you while I pack "

She hung up and turned to Rearden.

"Tonight?" he said

"I have to "

"I guess so Don't you have to go to Colorado, anyway?"

"Yes I intended to leave tomorrow night But I think Eddie can manage to take care of my office, and I'd better start now It takes three days"—she remembered—"it will now take five days to reach Utah I have to go by train, there are people I have to see on the line—this can't be delayed, either "

"How long will you stay in Colorado?'

"Hard to tell "

"Wire me when you get there, will you? If it looks as if it's going to be long, I'll join you there "

This was the only expression he could give to the words he had

knew, by a faint, solemn stress in the tone of his voice, that s was his acceptance of her confession, his surrender, his forgive s. She asked, 'Can you leave the mills?

"It will take me a few days to arrange, but I can "

He knew what her words were admitting, acknowledging and giving him, when she said, "Hank, why don t you meet me in lorado in a week? If you fly your plane, we ll both get there at same time And then we ll come back together "

"All right . . . dearest."

* *

She dictated a list of instructions, while pacing her bedroom, thering her clothes, hastily packing a suitcase Rearden had left, ddie Willers sat at her dressing table, making notes He seemed to ork in his usual manner of unquestioning efficiency, as if he were

'Hell, yes!—the Comet."

"Okay "

we did

"—when we were building the John Galt Line?" he asked quietly.

" she

Springs It will be all right The hardest thing to find was—"

"The men?"

"Yes The ... West ove

... Arizona.

stood me He wasn't angry He sounded sad But he wouldn't ... He said one must not try to bring people back out of the grav . . He wished me luck I think he meant it . . . You know, I do think he's one of those that the destroyer knocked out. I think just broke by himself"

"Yes I know he did."

Eddie saw the expression on her face and pulled himself hastily "Oh, we finally found a man to put in charge at Elgin," said, forcing his voice to sound confident. "Don't worry, the tra will be built long before you get there"

... of a smile, think desper worry his sm had a touch of embarrassed apology

matter with him he thought it inexcusable that he should ... discipline slipping just because this was a room, not an office

She went on speaking—and he listened, looking down at his p making a brief notation once in a while He did not permit him to look at her again

... off a han

"Send out orders that the Comet is to stop at every division point," she said, "and that all division superintendents are to prepare

he did not hear the
own hanging on the
own with the white
initials HR on its breast pocket.

He remembered where he had seen that gown before, he remembered the ... table in the Wayne-
to
he
f a
so
der
ore
hat

"I beg your pardon," he said, his voice barely audible, "I didn't hear what you said"

"I said I want a report from all superintendents on every foot of rail and every piece of equipment available on their divisions"

"Okay"

"I will confer with each of them in turn. Have them meet me in my car aboard the Comet."

"Okay"

"Send word out—unofficially—that the engineers are to make up time for the stops by going seventy, eighty, a hundred miles an hour, anything they wish as and when they need to, and that I will . . . Eddie?"

"Yes. Okay."

"Eddie, what's the matter?"

He had to look up, to face her and, desperately, to lie for the first time in his life. "I'm . . . I'm afraid of the trouble we'll get into with the law," he said.

"Forget it. Don't you see that there isn't any law left? Anything goes now, for whoever can get away with it—and, for the moment, it's we who're setting the terms."

When she was ready, he carried her suitcase to a taxicab, then down the platform of the Taggart Terminal to her office car, the last at the end of the Comet He stood on the platform, saw the train jerk forward and watched the red markers on the back of the car slipping slowly away from him into the long darkness of the tunnel When they ... one, he felt what one feels at ... of a dream one had ... till after it was lost.

There were few people on the platform around him and they seemed to move with self-conscious strain, as if a sense of disaster clung to the rails and to the girders above their heads He thought indifferently that after a century of safety, men were once more regarding the departure of a train as an event involving a gamble with death

He remembered that he had had no dinner, and he felt no desire to eat, but the underground cafeteria of the Taggart Terminal was more truly his home than the empty cube of space he now thought of as his apartment—so he walked to the cafeteria, because he had no other place to go

The cafeteria was almost deserted—but the first thing he saw as he entered was a thin column of smoke rising from the cigarette of the worker, who sat alone at a table in a dark corner

Not noticing what he put on his tray, Eddie carried it to the worker's table, said, "Hello," sat down and said nothing else. He looked at the silverware spread before him, wondered about its purpose, remembered the use of a fork and attempted to perform the motions of eating but found that it was beyond his power After a while, he looked up and saw that the worker's eyes were studying him attentively

"No," said Eddie, "no, there's nothing the matter with me Oh yes, a lot has happened but what difference does it make now? . Yes, she's back What else do you want me to say about it? How did you know she's back? Oh well, I suppose the whole company knew it within the first ten minutes No, I don't know whether I'm glad that she's back . . . Sure, she'll save the railroad—for another year or month What do you want me to say? No, she didn't. She didn't tell me what she's counting on. Sh
do you su
Only my ,
talk about
it, stop thinking of her and—of her, I mean"

He remained silent and he wondered why the worker's eyes—the eyes that always seemed to see everything within him—made him feel uneasy tonight He glanced down at the table, and he noticed the butts of many cigarettes among the remnants of food on the worker's plate

"Are you in trouble, too?" asked Eddie "Oh, just that you've sat here for a long time tonight, haven't you? . For me? Why should you have wanted to wait for me? . You know, I never thought you cared whether you saw me or not, me or anybody, you seemed so complete in yourself, and that's why I liked to talk to you, because I felt that you always understood, but nothing could hurt you—you looked as if nothing had ever hurt you—and it made me feel free, as if as if there were no pain in the world . Do you know what's strange about your face? You look as if you've never known pain or fear or guilt. . . I'm sorry I'm so late tonight I had to see her off—she has just left, on the Comet. . . . tonight, just now . . . Yes, she's gone . . . Yes, it was a

about, the remnant that she found. Daniels? He s a physicist who s been working for the past year, at the Utah Institute of Technology, trying to solve the secret of the motor and to rebuild it

Why do you look at me like that? No I haven t told you about him before because it was a secret It was a private secret project of her own—and of what interest would it have been to you anyway? I guess I can talk about it now, because he s quit. Yes he told her his reasons He said that he won't give anything produced by his mind to a world that regards him as a slave He said that he won t be made a martyr to people in exchange for giving them an inestimable benefit What—what are you laughing at? Stop it, will you? Why do you laugh like that?

The whole secret? What do you mean the whole secret? He

back again. Not one of them has No I don't care, not any more we've taken so many losses that I m getting used to it

Oh no! It s not Daniels that I can t take it s—no drop it Don t question me about it The whole world is going to pieces, she s still fighting to

I had no right t

nothing—and

pay any attenti

it s myself

Transcontinental as I loved it, that it meant something special to you something personal, and that was why you liked to hear me talk about it But this—the thing I learned today—this has nothing to do with the railroad It would be of no importance to you Forget it. It s something that I didn t know about her, that s all. I grew up with her I thought I knew her I didn t I don't know what it was that I expected I suppose I just thought that she had no private life of any kind To me she was not a person and

tha

oth

I s

What

that I wanted to kill him! . . . What's the matter with you tonight? Why do you look at me like that? . . . Oh, what's the matter with all of us? Why is there nothing but misery left for anyone? Why do we suffer so much? We weren't meant to I always thought that we were to be happy, all of us, as our natural fate What are we doing? What have we lost? A year ago, I wouldn't have damned her for finding something she wanted But I know that they're doomed, both of them, and so am I, and so is everybody, and she was all I had left It was so great, to be alive, it was such a wonderful chance I didn't know that I loved it and that *that* was our love, hers and mine and yours—but the world is perishing and we cannot stop it Why are we destroying ourselves? Who will tell us the truth? Who will save us? Oh, who is John Galt?! . No, it's no use It doesn't matter now Why should I feel anything? We won't

Chapter X THE SIGN OF THE DOLLAR

She sat at the window of the train, her head thrown back, not moving wishing she would never have to move again

The telegraph poles went racing past the window, but the train seemed lost in a void, between a brown stretch of prairie and a solid spread of rusty, graying clouds The twilight was draining the sky without the wound of a sunset, it looked more like the fading of an anemic body in the process of exhausting its last drops of blood and light The train was going west, as if it, too, were pulled to follow the sinking rays and quietly to vanish from the earth She sat still, feeling no desire to resist it

She wished she would not hear the sound of the wheels They knocked in an even rhythm, every fourth knock accented—and it seemed to her that through the rapid, running clatter of some futile stampede to escape, the beat of the accented knocks was like the steps of an enemy moving toward some inexorable purpose

She had never experienced it before, this sense of apprehension at the sight of a prairie, this feeling that the rail was only a fragile thread stretched across an enormous emptiness, like a worn nerve ready to break She had never expected that she, who had felt as if she were the motive power aboard a train, would now sit wishing, like a child or a savage, that this train would move, that it would not stop that it would get her there on time—wishing it, not like an act of will, but like a plea to a dark unknown

She thought of what a difference one month had made She had seen it in the faces of the men at the stations The track workers, the switchmen the yardmen who had always greeted her, anywhere along the line, their cheerful grins boasting that they knew who she was—had now looked at her stonily, turning away, their faces wary and closed She had wanted to cry to them in apology, "It's not I done it to you!"—then had remembered that she had ac-

it and that they now had the right to hate her, that she was slave and a driver of slaves, and so was every human being country, and hatred was the only thing that men could now r one another

had found reassurance, for two days, in the sight of the cities g past her window—the factories, the bridges, the electric the billboards pressing down upon the roofs of homes—the

of energy, in the East, generations ago, had splattered bright les to run through the emptiness, some were gone, but some lived She was startled when the lights of a small town swept ss her car and, vanishing, left it darker than it had been re She would not move to turn on the light She sat still, watch- the rare towns Whenever an electric beam went flashing briefly er face, it was like a moment's greeting.

he saw them as they went by, written on the walls of modest ctures, over sooted roofs, down slender smokestacks, on the ves of tanks Reynolds Harvesters—Macey Cement—Quinlan & ies Pressed Alfalfa—Home of the Crawford Mattress—Benjamin the Grain and Feed—words raised like flags to the empty dark- s of the sky, the motionless forms of movement, of effort, of urage, of hope, the monuments to how much had been achieved the edge of nature's void by men who had once been free to hieve—she saw the homes built in scattered privacy, the small ops, the wide streets with electric lighting, like a few luminous rokes criss-crossed on the black sheet of the wastelands—she saw e ghosts between, the remnants of towns, the skeletons of factories ith crumbling smokestacks, the corpses of shops with broken anes, the slanting poles with shreds of wire—she saw a sudden laze, the rare sight of a gas station, a glittering white island of glass and metal under the huge black weight of space and sky—she aw an ice-cream cone made of radiant tubing, hanging above the corner of a street, and a battered car being parked below, with a young boy at the wheel and a girl stepping out, her white dress blowing in the summer wind—she shuddered for the two of them, thinking I can't look at you, I who know what it has taken to give you your youth, to give you this evening, this car and the ice-cream cone you're going to buy for a quarter—she saw on the edge beyond a town, a building glowing with tiers of pale blue light the industrial light she loved ... ndows and

man That was twelve years ago Then the owner of the plant died and the heirs who took it over ran it into the ground. Times were bad then but it was since then that things started going to pieces everywhere faster and faster Since then it seems like anywhere I turned—the place cracked and went At first, we thought it was only one state or another A lot of us thought that Colorado would last But it went, too Anything you tried, anything you touched—it fell Anywhere you looked work was stopp ng—the factories were stopping—the machines were stopping—" he added slowly in a whisper as if seeing some secret terror of his own, *the motors were stopping* His voice rose "Oh God who is— and broke off

"—John Galt?" she asked

"Yes he said and shook his head as if to d spel some vision, "only I don t like to say that

I don t either I wish I knew why people are saying it and who started it

"That s it, ma am That s what I m afraid of It might have been me who started it"

What?

Me or about s x thousand others We might have I think we d d I hope we re wrong"

What do you mean?

"Well there was something that happened at that plant where I worked for twenty years It was when the old man died and his he rs took over There were three of them two sons and a daughter and they brought a new plan to run the factory They let us vote on it too and everybody—almost everybody—voted for it We didn t know We thought it was good No that s not true e ther We thought that we were supposed to think it was good The plan was that everybody in the factory would work according to his abil ty but would be paid according to h s need We—what s the matter ma am? Why do you look like that?

"What was the name of the factory?" she asked her vo ce barely aud ble

"The Twentieth Century Motor Company, ma am of Starnesville Wiscons n"

"Go on"

"We voted for that plan at a big meeting with all of us present, six thousand of us everybody that worked in the factory The Starnes he rs made long speeches about it and it wasn t too clear but nobody asked any questions None of us knew just how the plan would work but every one of us thought that the next fellow knew it. And if anybody had doubts he felt guilty and kept h s mouth shut—because they made it sound l ke anyone who d oppose the plan was a child killer at heart and less than a human be ng They told us that this plan would achieve a noble ideal. Well how were we to know otherwise? Hadn t we heard it all our lives—from our parents and our schoolteachers and our ministers and in every newspaper we ever read and every movie and every publ c speech? Hadn t we always been told that this was r ghteous

l just? Well, maybe there's some excuse for what we did at t meeting Sull, we voted for the plan—and what we got, we l it coming to us You know, ma'am, we are marked men, a way, those of us who lived through the four years of that n in the Twentieth Century factory What is it that hell is sup-sed to be? Evil—plain, naked, smirking evil, isn't it? Well, t's what we saw and helped to make—and I think we're damned, ry one of us, and maybe we'll never be forgiven

'Do you know how it worked, that plan, and what it did to ople? Try pouring water into a tank where there's a pipe at the ttom draining it out faster than you pour it, and each bucket u bring breaks that pipe an inch wider, and the harder you

phew's schooling—for the baby next door—for the baby to be rn—for anyone anywhere around you—it's theirs to receive, om diapers to dentures—and yours to work, from sunup to sun-wn, month after month, year after year, with nothing to show r it but your sweat, with nothing in sight for you but their easure, for the whole of your life, without rest, without hope, thout end . From each according to his ability, to each cording to his need . .

"We're all one big family, they told us, we're all in this to-ther But you don't all stand working an acetylene torch ten urs a day—together, and you don't all get a bellyache—together hat's whose ability and which of whose needs comes first? When s all one pot, you can't let any man decide what his own needs e, can you? If you did, he might claim that he needs a yacht—d if his feelings is all you have to go by, he might prove it, o Why not? If it's not right for me to own a car until I've orked myself into a hospital ward, earning a car for every loafer nd every naked savage on earth—why can't he demand a yacht om me, too, if I still have the ability not to have collapsed? lo? He can't? Then why can he demand that I go without cream or my coffee until he's replastered his living room? Oh ell . . Well, anyway, it was decided that nobody had the right o judge his own need or ability We *voted* on it Yes, ma'am we oted on it in a public meeting twice a year How else could it e done? Do you care to think what would happen at such a meet ng? It took us just one meeting to discover that we had become eggars—rotten, whining, sniveling beggars, all of us because no nan could claim his pay . . . . .
nd no earnings, his wor. .
the family,' and they ow
laim he had on them wa .
or relief from his needs, like any lousy moocher, listing all us troubles and miseries, down to his patched drawers and his wife's head colds, hoping that 'the family' would throw him lms He had to claim miseries, because it's miseries, not

that had become the coin of the realm—so it turned into a contest among six thousand panhandlers each claiming that *his* need was worse than his brother s How else could it be done? Do you care to guess what happened what sort of men kept quiet, feeling shame and what sort got away with the jackpot?

"But that wasn
at the same meet
per cent in that
hadn t delivered
tell it? The family voted on that, too They voted which men were the best and these men were sentenced to work overtime each night for the next six months Overtime without pay—because you weren t paid by time and you weren t paid by work, only by need

Do I have to tell you what happened after that—and into what sort of creatures we all started turning we who had once been human? We began to hide whatever ability we had to slow down and watch like hawks that we never worked any faster or better than the next fellow What else could we do, when we knew that if we did our best for the family it s not thanks or rewards that we d get but punishment? We knew that for every stinker who'd ruin a batch of motors and cost the company money—either through his sloppiness because he didn t have to care or through plain incompetence—it s we who d have to pay with our nights and ou[illegible]

'The [illegible]
noble [illegible]
ful he [illegible]
process that saved us thousands of man hours He gave it to the family, d dn t ask anything for it either, couldn t ask, but that was all right with him It was for the ideal he said But when he found himself voted as one of our ablest and sentenced to night work because we hadn t gotten enough from him he shut his mouth and his brain You can bet he didn t come up with any ideas the second year

"What was it they d always told us about the vicious competition of the profit system where men had to compete for who d do a better job than his fellows? Vicious wasn t it? Well they should have seen what it was like when we all had to compete with one another for who d do the worst job possible There s no surer way to destroy a man than to force him into a spot where he has to aim at *not* doing his best where he has to struggle to do a bad job day after day That will finish him quicker than drink or idleness or pulling stick ups for a living But there was nothing else for us to do except to fake unfitness The one accusation we feared was to be suspected of ability Ability was like a mortgage on you that you could never pay off And what was there to work for? You knew that your basic pittance would be given to you anyway whether you worked or not—your housing and feeding allowance, it was called—and above that pittance you had no chance to get anything no matter how hard you tried. You couldn't count on

ing a new suit of clothes next year—they might give you a
th ng allowance or they might not, according to whether no-
... b rth to more babies
y then

ise he d
gradu
ut the
e They
to send

erybody s sons to college—and that we first had to send every
dy s children through high school and we didn t even have
... n a knife fight
icular—

who had
ever got
uy him
y didn't

ve him any 'allowance for records— personal luxury,' they called
. But at that same meeting Millie Bush somebody s daughter

I

usic turned to drink, instead. He got so you never saw him ully conscious any more But it seems like there was one thing e couldn't forget One night he came staggering down the treet, saw Millie Bush swung his fist and knocked all her teeth ut. Every one of them

"Drink of course was what we all turned to some more some ess Don't ask how we got the money for it When all the decent pleasures are forbidden, there s always ways to get the rotten ones You don t break into grocery stores after dark and you don't pick your fellow s pockets to buy classical symphonies or fishing tackle but if it s to get stinking drunk and forget—you do Fishing tackle? Hunting guns? Snapshot cameras? Hobbies? There wasn t any amusement allowance' for anybody Amusement was the first thing they dropped Aren't you always supposed to be ashamed to object when anybody asks you to give up anything if it s some thing that gave you pleasure? Even our tobacco allowance was cut to where we got two packs of cigarettes a month—and this they told us was because the money had to go into the babies' milk fund Babies was the only item of production that didn't fall but rose and kept on rising—because people had nothing else to do I guess and because they didn t have to care the baby wasn't their burden it was 'the family s In fact the best chance you had of getting a raise and breathing easier for a while was a baby allowance Either that or a major disease

"It didn t take us long to see how it all worked out. Any who tried to ... had to refuse himself everything

lost his taste for any pleasure, he hated to smoke a nickel's worth of tobacco or chew a stick of gum, worrying whether somebody had more need for that nickel He felt ashamed of every mouthfu of food he swallowed, wondering whose weary nights of overtime had paid for it, knowing that his food was not his by right, miser ably wishing to be cheated rather than to cheat, to be a sucker bu not a blood sucker He wouldn't marry, he wouldn't help his folk back home, he wouldn't put an extra burden on 'the family' Be ... he couldn'

[illegible]

ability allowance' they got more sicknesses than any doctor cou disprove, they ruined their clothing, their furniture, their homes—what the hell, 'the family' was paying for it! They found more way of ... —they d

[illegible]

punished those who observed it—for observing it The more y tried to live up to it, the more you suffered, the more you cheate it, the bigger reward you got Your honesty was like a tool le at the mercy of the next man's dishonesty The honest ones pai the dishonest collected The honest lost, the dishonest won Ho long could men stay good under this sort of a law of goodnes We were a pretty decent bunch of fellows when we started The weren't many chiselers among us We knew our jobs and we we proud of it and we worked for the best factory in the countr where old man Starnes hired nothing but the pick of the country labor Within one year under the new plan, there wasn't an hone man left among us *That* was the evil, the sort of hell horro evil that preachers used to scare you with, but you never thoug to see alive Not that the plan encouraged a few bastards, but th it turned decent people into bastards, and there was nothin else that it could do—and it was called a moral ideal!

"What was it we were supposed to want to work for? For th love of our brothers? What brothers? For the bums, the loafer the moochers we saw all around us? And whether they were chea ing or plain incompetent, whether they were unwilling or unable—what ... tied for life to th ... g could we care ... ty, we had no wa ... hat we were beas ... lace that was hal ... hing but disabilit ... of whatever wh ever chose to say was whichever's need

"Love of our brothers? That's when we learned to hate ou brothers for the first time in our lives We began to hate the

very meal they swallowed, for every small pleasure they en
, for one man's new shirt, for another's wife's hat for an
—it was taken
our hunger
h the others
at the next
nformed on people,
s family
t likely
d family
time we
miserable
ant any

a baby
used to chip in and help him out with the hospital bills if he
pened to be hard pressed for the moment Now, if a baby was
n, we didn't speak to the parents for weeks Babies to us, had
ome what locusts were to farmers In the old days we used
help a man if he had a bad illness in the family Now—well
tell you about just one case It was the mother of a man who

ll doctor said that she'd have to be sent to a hospital in town for
pensive treatments that would take a long time The old lady
ed the night before she was to leave for town They never
tablished the cause of death No, I don't know whether she was
urdered. Nobody said that Nobody would talk about it at all All
know is that I—and that's what I can't forget!—I too had
ught myself wishing that she would die This—may God forgive
s!—was the brotherhood the security, the abundance that the
lan was supposed to achieve for us!

"Was there any reason why this sort of horror would ever be
reached by anybody? Was there anybody who got any profit
rom it? There was The Starnes heirs I hope you're not going
to remind me that they'd sacrificed a fortune and turned the
actory over to us as a gift. We were fooled by that one too
Yes, they gave up the factory But profit, ma'am depends on what
t is you're after And what the Starnes heirs were after no money
on earth could b ... cent for that
that didn't have
himself voted as
ch didn't do any
thing, except that he had a staff for the not doing of anything so
he didn't have to bother sticking around the office The pay he got
—well, I shouldn't call it 'pay,' none of us was 'paid'—the alms
voted to him was fairly modest, about ten times what I got, but
that wasn't riches Eric didn't care for money—he wouldn't h
known what to do with it. He spent his time hanging around

us, showing how chummy he was and democratic He wanted to be loved, it seems The way he went about it was to keep reminding us that he had given us the factory We couldn't stand him

"Gerald Starnes was our Director of Production We never learned just what the size of his rake-off—his alms—had been It would have taken a staff of accountants to figure that out, and a staff of engineers to trace the way it was piped, directly or indirectly into his office None of it was supposed to be for him—it was all for company expenses Gerald had three cars, four secretaries, five telephones, and he used to throw champagne and caviar parties that no tax-paying tycoon in the country could have afforded He spent more money in one year than his father had earned in profits in the last two years of his life We saw a hundred pound stack—a hundred pounds we weighed them—of magazines in Gerald's office, full of stories about our factory and our noble plan, with big pictures of Gerald Starnes, calling him a great social crusader Gerald liked to come into the shops at night, dressed in his formal clothes, flashing diamond cuff links the size of a nickel and shaking cigar ashes all over Any cheap show-off who's got nothing to parade but his cash is bad enough—except that he makes no bones about the cash being his, and you're free to gape at him or not, as you wish, and mostly you don't But when a bastard like Gerald Starnes puts on an act and keeps spouting that he doesn't care for material wealth, that he's only serving 'the family,' that all the lushness is not for himself, but for our sake and for the common good, because it's necessary to keep up the prestige of the company and of the noble plan in the eyes of the public—then that's when you learn to hate the creature as you've never hated anything human.

"But his sister Ivy was worse She really did not care for material wealth The alms she got was no bigger than ours, and she went about in scuffed, flat heeled shoes and shirtwaists—just to show how selfless she was She was our Director of Distribution. She was the lady in charge of our needs She was the one who held us by the throat. Of course, distribution was supposed to be decided by voting—by the voice of the people But when the people are six thousand howling voices, trying to decide without yardstick, rhyme or reason, when there are no rules to the game and each can demand anything but has a right to nothing, when everybody holds power over everybody's life except his own—then it turns out, as it did, that the voice of the people is Ivy Starnes By the end of the second year, we dropped the pretense of the 'family meetings'—in the name of 'production efficiency and time economy,' one meeting used to take ten days—and all the petitions of need were simply sent to Miss Starnes' office No, not sent. They had to be recited to her in person by every petitioner Then she made up a distribution list, which she read to us for our vote of approval at a meeting that lasted three-quarters of an hour We voted approval There was a ten minute period on the agenda for discussion and objections We made no objections We knew - by that time Nobody can divide a factory's income among

[illegible] gauge to measure
[illegible] father's
[illegible] to speak
[illegible] our best
[illegible] at looked
[illegible]ny, cold and dead And if you ever want to see pure evil, you should have seen the way her eyes glinted when she watched some [illegible]

[illegible] but the guff helped us to hide it from our [illegible] from ourselves The guff gave us a chance to pass off as virtue something that we'd be ashamed to admit otherwise There wasn't a man voting for it who didn't think that under a setup of this kind he'd muscle in on the profits of the men abler than himself There wasn't a man rich and smart enough but that he didn't think that somebody was richer and smarter, and this plan would give him a share of his better's wealth and brain. But while he was thinking that *he'd* get unearned benefits from the men above, he forgot about the men below who'd get unearned benefits too He forgot about *all* his inferiors who'd rush to drain him just as he hoped to drain his superiors The worker who liked the idea that his need entitled him to a limousine like his boss's, forgot that every bum and *beggar* on earth would come howling that *their* need entitled them to an icebox like his own. *That* was our real motive when we voted—that was the truth of it—but we didn't like to think it, so the less we liked it, the louder we yelled about our love for the common *good*.

"Well, we got what we asked for By the time we saw what it was that we'd asked for, it was too late We were trapped, with no place to go The best men among us left the factory in the first week of the plan. We lost our best engineers, superintendents, foremen and highest-skilled workers A man of self respect [illegible] turn into a milch cow for anybody Some able fellows tried to stick it out, but they couldn't take it for long We kept [illegible] our men, they kept [illegible]ing from the factory like from a

hole—till we had nothing left except the men of need, but n
of the men of ability

"And the few of us who were still any good, but stayed on, w
only those who had been there too long In the old days, nob
ever quit the Twentieth Century—and, somehow, we couldn't m
ourselves believe that it was gone After a while, we couldn't q
because no other employer would have us—for which I can't bla
him Nobody would deal with us in any way, no respectable p
son or firm All the small shops, where we traded, started mov
out of Starnesville fast—till we had nothing left but saloo
gambling joints and crooks who sold us trash at gouging pri
The alms we got kept falling but the cost of our living went
The list of the factory's needy kept stretching but the list of
customers shrank There was less and less income to divide amo
more and more people In the old days, it used to be said that
Twentieth Century Motor trademark was as good as the ka
mark on gold I don't know what it was that the Starnes he
thought, if they thought at all, but I suppose that like all so
planners and like savages, they thought that this trademark was
magic stamp which did the trick by some sort of voodoo pow
and that it would keep them rich as it had kept their father W
when our customers began to see that we never delivered an or
on time and never put out a motor that didn't have somethi
wrong with it—the magic stamp began to work the other w
around people wouldn t take a motor as a gift, if it was mark
Twentieth Century And it came to where our only customers w
men who never paid and never meant to pay their bills But Ger
Starnes, doped by his own publicity, got huffy and went arou
with an air of moral superiority, demanding that businessm
place orders with us not because our motors were good, but b
cause we *needed* the orders so badly

"By that time, a village half wit could see what generations
professors had f
do to a power
defective engine
operating table
it do to the passengers of a plane when its motor failed in mid-a
And if they bought our product, not because of its merit, but b
cause of our need, would that be the good, the right the mo
thing to do for the owner of that power plant, the surgeon in th
hospital, the maker of that plane?

"Yet this was the moral law that the professors and leaders a
thinkers had wanted to establish all over the earth If this is wh
it did in a single small town where we all knew one another,
you care to think w
to imagine what
when you're tie
the globe? To w
you who would
to rise, with you meals and your clothes and your home and yo
leasure depending on any swindle any famine, any pestilence an

here on earth To work—with no chance for an extra ration, till ie Cambodians have been fed and the Patagonians have been sent rough college To work—on a blank check held by every creature orn, by men whom you'll never see, whose needs you'll never now, whose ability or laziness or sloppiness or fraud you have o way to learn and no right to question—just to work and work nd work—and leave it up to the Ivys and the Geralds of the vorld to decide whose stomach will consume the effort, the dreams nd the days of your life. And *this* is the moral law to accept? *This* —a moral ideal?

"Well, we tried it—and we learned. Our agony took four years, rom our first meeting to our last, and it ended the only way it ould end in bankruptcy At our last meeting, Ivy Starnes was he one who tried to brazen it out She made a short, nasty, snippy ittle speech in which she said that the plan had failed because he rest of the country had not accepted it, that a single community ould not succeed in the midst of a selfish, greedy world—and hat the plan was a noble ideal, but human nature was not good nough for it. A young boy—the one who had been punished or giving us a useful idea in our first year—got up as we all sat ilent, and walked straight to Ivy Starnes on the platform He said nothing He spat in her face That was the end of the noble plan and of the Twentieth Century."

The man had spoken as if the burden of his years of silence had slipped suddenly out of his grasp She knew that this was his *tribute* to her he had shown no reaction to her kindness, he had seemed numbed to human value or human hope, but something within him had been reached and his response was this confession, *this long*, desperate cry of rebellion against injustice, held back for years, but breaking out in recognition of the first person he had met in whose hearing an appeal for justice would not be hopeless It was as if the life he had been about to renounce were given back to him by the two essentials he needed by his food and by the presence of a rational being

"But what about John Galt?" she asked

"Oh . . ." he said, remembering 'Oh, yes ."

"You were going to tell me why people started asking that question"

"Yes . ." He was looking off, as if at some sight which he had studied for years, but which remained unchanged and unsolved, his face had an odd, questioning look of terror

"You were going to tell me who was the John Galt they mean—if there . .

cide

at

it, . . . not. I don't know . . . The meeting was held on a spring night, twelve years ago The six thousand of us were crowded on bleachers built way up to the rafters of the plant's largest hangar.

ant, but they knew too well the feeling that made us cry it They, ı felt that something had gone from the world Perhaps this was ıy they began to say it whenever they felt that there was no pe. I'd like to think that I am wrong that those words mean thing, that there s no conscious intention and no avenger be- ıd the ending of the human race But when I hear them repeating ıt question I feel afraid I think of the man who said that he ɔuld stop the motor of the world You see his name was John ılt."

* *

She awakened because the sound of the wheels had changed It as an irregular beat with sudden screeches and short, sharp acks a sound like the broken laughter of hysteria with the fitful

iven a bedroom to the tramp and then had remained alone with ıs story She had wanted to think of it of all the questions she ıtended to ask him tomorrow—but she had found her mind frozen nd still, like a spectator staring at the story unable to function, ınly to stare She had felt as if she knew the meaning of that pectacle knew it with no further questions and had to escape t. To move—had been the words beating in her mind with peculiar ırgency—to move—as if movement had become an end in itself rucial absolute and doomed

Through a thin layer of sleep the sound of the wheels had kept running a race with the growth of her tension She had kept awakening as in a causeless start of panic finding herself upright in the darkness thinking blankly What was it?—then telling her self in reassurance We re moving we re still moving

The track of the Kansas Western was worse than she had ex pected—she thought, listening to the wheels The train was now carrying her hundreds of miles away from Utah She had felt a desperate desire to get off the train on the main line abandon all the problems of Taggart Transcontinental find an airplane and fly straight to Quentin Daniels It had taken a cheerless effort of will to remain in her car

She lay in the darkness, listening to the wheels thinking that only Daniels and his motor still remained like a point of fire ahead, pulling her forward Of what use would the motor now be to her? She had no answer Why did she feel so certain of the desperate need to hurry? She had no answer To reach him in time was the only ultimatum left in her mind She held onto it asking no questions Wordlessly she knew the real answer the motor was needed, not to move trains, but to keep her moving

She could not hear the beat of the fourth knocks any longer in the jumbled screeching of metal she could not hear the steps of the enemy she was racing only the hopeless stampede of panic.

I'll get there in time, she thought I'll get there first,

save the motor *There s* one motor he s not going to stop she thought he s not going to stop he s not going to stop

He s not going to stop she thought—awakening with a jolt, jerking her head off the pillow The wheels had stopped.

For a moment she remained still trying to grasp the peculiar stillness around her It felt like the impossible attempt to create a sensory image of non-existence There were no attributes of reality to perceive nothing but the r absence no sound as if she were alone on the train—no motion as if this were not a train but a room in a build ng—no light, as if this were neither train nor room but space without objects—no sign of violence or physical disaster as if this were the state where disaster is no longer possible

In the moment when she grasped the nature of the stillness her body sprang upright with a single curve of motion immediate and v olent l ke a cry of rebellion The loud screech of the window shade went like a knife-cut through the silence as she threw the shade upward There was nothing outside but anonymous stretches of prairie a strong wind was breaking the clouds and a shaft of moonlight fell through but it fell upon plains that seemed as dead as those from which it came

The sweep of her hand pressed the light switch and the bell to summon the porter The electric light came on and brought her back to a rational world She glanced at her watch it was a few m nutes past midn ght She looked out of the rear window the track went off in a straight line and at the prescribed distance she saw the red lanterns left on the ground placed conscientiously to protect the rear of the train The sight seemed reassuring

She pressed the porter s bell once more She waited She went to the vestibule unlocked the door and leaned out to look down the line of the train A few windows were lighted in the long, tapering band of steel, but she saw no figures no s gn of human activity She slammed the door came back and started to dress, her movements suddenly calm and swift

No one came to answer her bell When she hastened across to the next car she felt no fear no uncertainty no despair nothing but the urgency of action

There was no porter in the cubbyhole of the next car no porter in the car beyond She hurried down the narrow passageways meeting no one But a few compartment doors were open The passengers sat inside dressed or half-dressed silently as if wait ing They watched her rush by with oddly furtive glances, as if they knew what she was after as if they had expected someone to come and to face what they had not faced She went on runn ng down the spinal cord of a dead train noting the peculiar combina tion of lighted compartments open doors and empty passages no one had ventured to step out No one had wanted to ask the first question

She ran through the train s only coach where some passengers slept in contorted poses of exhaustion while others awake and st ll sat hunched l ke animals waiting for a blow making no move to avert it.

the vestibule of the coach, she stopped. She saw a man, who unlocked the door and was leaning out, looking inquiringly d through the darkness, ready to step off He turned at the d of her approach She recognized his face it was Owen ogg the man who had rejected the future she had once ed him

Kellogg!" she gasped, the sound of laughter in her voice like a of relief at the sudden sight of a man in a desert

Hello, Miss Taggart," he answered, with an astonished smile that a touch of incredulous pleasure—and of wistfulness "I didn't v you were aboard."

Come on," she ordered as if he were still an employee of the oad. "I think we're on a frozen train"

We are," he said, and followed her with prompt, disciplined lience

No explanations were necessary It was as if, in unspoken under ding, they were answering a call to duty—and it seemed natural of the hundreds aboard, it was the two of them who should partners in danger

Any idea how long we've been standing?" she asked, as they ried on through the next car

No," he said. "We were standing when I woke up"

They went the length of the train finding no porters, no waiters the diner, no brakemen, no conductor They glanced at each er once in a while, but kept silent. They knew the stories of ndoned trains, of the crews that vanished in sudden bursts of ellion against serfdom

They got off at the end of the train, with no motion around m save the wind on their faces, and they climbed swiftly aboard engine The engine's headlight was on, stretching like an ac- ing arm into the void of the night The engine's cab was empty Her cry of desperate triumph broke out in answer to the shock the sight "Good for them! They're human beings!

She stopped, aghast, as at the cry of a stranger She noticed that llogg stood watching her curiously, with the faint hint of a smile.

It was an old steam engine, the best that the railroad had been le to provide for the Comet The fire was banked in the grates, e steam gauge was low, and in the great windshield before them e headlight fell upon a band of ties that should have been running meet them but lay still instead, like a ladder's steps, counted, mbered and ended.

She reached for the logbook and looked at the names of the ain's last crew The engineer had been Pat Logan.

Her head dropped slowly, and she closed her eyes She thought of e first run on a green blue track, that must have been in Pat ogan's mind—as it was now in hers—through the silent hours of is last run on any rail.

"Miss Taggart?" said Owen Kellogg softly

She jerked her head up "Yes," she said, "yes Well"—her oice had no color except the metallic tinge of decision—"we'll ave to get to a phone and call for another crew" She glanced at

her watch At the rate we were running I think we must be about eighty miles from the Oklahoma state line I believe Bradshaw is this roads nearest division point to call We re somewhere within thirty miles of it

Are there any Taggart trains following us?

'The next one is Number 253 the transcontinental freight, but it won t get here till about seven A M, if its running on time which I doubt"

Only *one* freight in seven hours? He said it involuntarily with a note of outraged loyalty to the great railroad he had once been proud to serve

Her mouth moved in the brief snap of a smile "Our transcontinental traffic is not what it was in your day"

He nodded slowly I don't suppose there are any Kansas Western trains coming tonight either?

I can t remember offhand but I think not"

He glanced at the poles by the side of the track "I hope that the Kansas Western people have kept their phones in order"

You mean that the chances are they haven t if we judge by the state of their track But we ll have to try it.

"Yes"

She turned to go but stopped She knew it was useless to comment but the words came involuntarily You know she said, "it's those lanterns our men put behind the train to protect us that's the hardest thing to take They they felt more concern for human lives than their country had shown for theirs"

His swift glance at her was like a shot of deliberate emphasis, then he answered gravely Yes Miss Taggart"

Climbing down the ladder on the side of the engine they saw a cluster of passengers gathered by the track and more figures emerging from the train to join them By some special instinct of their own the men who had sat waiting knew that someone had taken charge someone had assumed the responsibility and it was now safe to show signs of life

They all looked at her with an air of inquiring expectation as she approached The unnatural pallor of the moonlight seemed to dissolve the differences of their faces and to stress the quality they all had in common a look of cautious appraisal part fear part plea part impertinence held in abeyance

Is there anyone here who wishes to be spokesman for the passengers?" she asked

They looked at one another There was no answer

"Very well she said "You dont have to speak I m Dagny Taggart the Operating Vice President of this railroad and"—there was a rustle of response from the group half movement half whisper resembling relief—"and I'll do the speaking. We are on a train that has been abandoned by its crew There was no physical accident The engine is intact But there is no one to run it This is what the newspapers call a frozen train You all know what it means—and you know the reasons Perhaps you knew the reasons long before they were discovered by the men who deserted you

tonight. The law forbade them to desert. But this will not help now"

woman shrieked suddenly, with the demanding petulance of ena. "What are we going to do?"

... night, the dead phosphorescence

mpotent, borrowed ener... The

ightgown, the coat wa

led under the gown's t

aner which assumes all human self revelation to be ugliness ! makes no effort to conceal it. For a moment, Dagny regretted necessity to continue

"I shall go down the track to a telephone," she continued, her ice clear and as cold as the moonlight "There are emergency ephones at intervals of five miles along the right-of way I shall ll for another crew to be sent here This will take some time You ll please stay aboard and maintain such order as you are capable maintaining"

"What about the gangs of raiders?' asked another woman s rvous voice

"That s true," said Dagny "I'd better have someone to accompany e Who wishes to go?"

She had misunderstood the woman s motive There was no answer here were no glances directed at her or at one another There ere no eyes—only moist ovals glistening in the moonlight There hey were, she thought, the men of the new age, the demanders nd ... a quality of anger a th... supposed to spare them ... ng of cruelty new to he... remained silent by conscious intention.

She noticed that Owen Kellogg, too, was waiting, but he was not watching the passengers, he was watching her face When he became certain that there would be no answer from the crowd, he said quietly, "I'll go with you, of course, Miss Taggart

"Thank you"

"What about us?" snapped the nervous woman

Dagny turned to her, answering in the formal inflectionless monotone of a business executive, "There have been no cases of raider gang attacks upon frozen trains—unfortunately

"Just where are we?" asked a bulky man with too expensive an overcoat and too flabby a face his voice had a tone intended for servants by a man unfit to employ them "In what part of what state?"

"I don t know," she answered

"How long will we be kept here?" asked another, in the a creditor who is imposed upon by a debtor

"I don t know"

"When will we get to San Francisco?" asked a third, in ner of a sheriff addressing a suspect.

"I don't know"

The do... a small track

where! I expect transportation!"

"Keep your mouth shut," said Dagny, "or I'll lock the train doors and leave you where you are."

"You can t do that! You're a common carrier! You have no right to discriminate against me! I'll report it to the Unification Board!"

"—if I give you a train to get you within sight or hearing of your Board, said Dagny, turning away.

She saw Kellogg looking at her, his glance like a line drawn under her words, underscoring them for her own attention.

"Get a flashlight somewhere," she said, "while I go to get my handbag, then we'll start"

When they started out on their way to the track phone, walking past the ... ther figure descending from ... he recognized the tramp

"Oh What s to be done?"

"I m going to a phone to call the division point"

"You can t go alone, ma'am Not these days I'd better go with you"

She smiled "Thanks But I ll be all right. Mr. Kellogg here is going with me Say—what s your name?'

"Jeff Allen, ma'am"

"Listen, Allen, have you ever worked for a railroad?"

"No, ma'am"

"Well, you re working for one now You're deputy-conductor and proxy-vice president in-charge-of-operation Your job is to take charge of this train in my absence, to preserve order and to keep the cattle from stampeding Tell them that I appointed you. You don t need any proof They'll obey anybody who expects obedience."

"Yes, ma'am" he answered firmly, with a look of understanding

She remembered that money inside a man's pocket had the power to turn into confidence inside his mind, she took a hundred-dollar bill from her bag and slipped it into his hand "As advance on wages," she said

"Yes, ma'am"

She had ... gart!"

... walked on

"Who is that?" asked Kellogg.

"A tramp who was caught stealing a ride"

"He'll do the job, I think."

"He will."

They walked silently past the engine and on in the direction of its idlight. At first, stepping from tie to tie, with the violent light iting against them from behind, they still felt as if they were home in the normal realm of a railroad Then she found herself tching the light on the ties under her feet, watching it ebb wly, trying to hold it, to keep seeing its fading glow, until she ew that the hint of a glow on the wood was no longer anything t moonlight She could not prevent the shudder that made her rn to look back. The headlight still hung behind them, like the uid silver globe of a planet, deceptively close, but belonging to other orbit and another system

Owen Kellogg walked silently beside her, and she felt certain at they knew each other's thoughts

"He couldn t have Oh God, he couldn't!" she said suddenly, not alizing that she had switched to words.

"Who?"

"Nathaniel Taggart. He couldn't have worked with people like iose passengers He couldn't have run trains for them He couldn't ave

e of her voice, which was love and pain and indignation, they've said for years that he rose by thwarting the ability of others, by leaving them no chance, and that that human incompetence was to his selfish interest . But he it wasn't obedience that he

"Miss

voice, "

—for a

civilized world Remember it, when you feel baffled by the nature of his enemies"

"Have you ever heard of a woman named Ivy Starnes?"

"Oh yes"

"I keep thinking that this was what she would have enjoyed—the spectacle of those passengers tonight This was what she s after But we—we can t live with it, you and I, can we? No one can live with it Its not possible to live with it"

"What makes you think that Ivy Starnes's purpose is life?"

Somewhere on the edge of her mind—like the wisps she saw floating on the edges of the prairie, neither quite rays nor fog nor cloud—she felt some shape which she could not grasp, half suggested and demanding to be grasped

She did not speak, and—like the links of a chain unrolling through their silence—the rhythm of their steps went on, spaced to the ties scored by the dry, swift beat of heels on wood

She had not had time to be aware of him, except as of a providential comrade in-competence, now she glanced at him with conscious attention. His face had the clear, hard look she remembered

having liked in the past But the face had grown calmer, as [illegible] more serenely at peace His clothes were threadbare He wore an [illegible] leather jacket, and even in the darkness she could distinguish [illegible] scuffed blotches streaking across the leather.

"What have you been doing since you left Taggart Transcontine[illegible] tal?' she asked

"Oh, many things"

"Where are you working now?"

"On special assignments, more or less"

"Of what kind?"

"Of every kind"

"You're not working for a railroad?"

"No"

The sharp brevity of the sound seemed to expand it into [illegible] eloquent statement She knew that he knew her motive "Kellogg, [illegible] told you that I don't have a single first-rate man left on the T[illegible] gart system, if I offered you any job, any terms, any money [illegible] cared to name—would you come back to us?"

"No"

"You were shocked by our loss of traffic. I don't think you ha[illegible] any idea of what our loss of men has done to us I can't tell [illegible] the sort of agony I went through three days ago, trying to find som[illegible] body able to build five miles of temporary track I have fifty mi[illegible] to build through the Rockies I see no way to do it But it has [illegible] be done I've combed the country for men There aren't any A[illegible] then to run into you suddenly, to find you here, in a day one [illegible] when I'd give half the system for one employee like you—*do* [illegible] understand why I can't let you go? Choose anything you w[illegible] Want to be general manager of a region? Or assistant operat[illegible] vice president?"

"No."

"You're still working for a living, aren't you?"

"Yes"

"You don't seem to be making very much"

"I'm making enough for my needs—and for nobody else's."

"Why are you willing to work for anyone but Taggart Tra[illegible] continental?"

"Bec[illegible] the k[illegible] of job I'd want."

"I?' [illegible] ,ou und[illegible] stood? [illegible]

"All [illegible]

"*What*?'

"Section hand Engine wiper" He smiled at the look on her fa[illegible] "No? You see, I said you wouldn't"

"Do you mean that you'd take a day laborer's job?"

"Any time you offered it."

[illegible] many men who're [illegible]

[illegible]

"What I need is your—"

"—mind, Miss Taggart? My mind is not on the market any iger"

She stood looking at him, her face growing harder "You're one them, aren't you?" she said at last

"Of whom?"

She did not answer, shrugged and went on

"Miss Taggart," he asked, "how long will you remain willing to *a common carrier?*"

"I won't surrender the world to the creature you're quoting."

"The answer you gave *her* was much more realistic"

The chain of their steps had stretched through many silent mutes before she asked, "Why did you stand by me tonight? Why ere you willing to help me?"

He answered easily, almost gaily, "Because there isn't a passenger n that train who needs to get where he's going more urgently than *do If* the train can be started, none will profit more than I But then I need something, I don't sit and expect transportation, like hat creature of yours"

"You don't? And ..."

"On a 'special assignment'?"

"No For a month's vacation with some friends"

"A vacation? And it's that important to you?"

"More important than anything on earth"

They had walked two miles when they came to the small gray box *on a post* by the trackside, which was the emergency telephone The box hung sidewise, beaten by storms She jerked it open The telephone *was there*, a familiar, reassuring object, glinting in the beam of Kellogg's flashlight But she knew, the moment she pressed the *receiver to* her ear, and he knew, when he saw her finger tapping sharply *against* the hook, that the telephone was dead

She handed the receiver to him without a word She held the flashlight, *while* he went swiftly over the instrument, then tore it off the wall an...

"The ...

instrume...

might b...

"Let's go," she said. He added, "The next one is five miles away"

Far behind them, the engine's headlight was still visible, not a planet any longer, but a small star winking through mists of distance. Ahead of them, the rail went off into bluish space, with nothing to mark its end.

She realized how often she had glanced back at that headlight, so long as it remained in sight, she had felt as if a life line were holding them anchored safely, now they had to break it and dive into ... and dive off this planet, she thought She noticed that Kellogg, too, stood looking back at the headlight.

They glanced at each other, but said nothing The crunch of a pebble under her shoe sole burst like a firecracker in the silence. With a coldly intentional movement, he kicked the telephone instrument and sent it rolling into a ditch the violence of the noise shattered the vacuum

"God damn him,' he said evenly, not raising his voice, with loathing past any display of emotion "He probably didn't feel like attending to his bob, and since he *needed* his pay check, nobody had the right to ask that he keep the phones in order"

"Come on," she said

"We can rest, if you feel tired, Miss Taggart"

"I'm all right We have no time to feel tired"

"That's our great error, Miss Taggart We ought to take the time, some day"

She gave a brief chuckle, she stepped onto a tie of the track, stressing the step as her answer, and they went on

It was hard, walking on ties, but when they tried to walk along the trackside, they found that it was harder The soil, half-sand, half-dust, sank under their heels, like the soft, unresisting spread of some substance that was neither liquid nor solid They went back to walking from tie to tie, it was almost like stepping from log to log in the midst of a river

She thought of what an enormous distance five miles had suddenly become, and that a division point thirty miles away was now unattainable—after an era of railroads built by men who thought in thousands of transcontinental miles That net of rails and lights, spreading from ocean to ocean, hung on the snap of a wire, on a broken connection inside a rusty phone—no, she thought, on something much more powerful and much more delicate It hung on the connections in the minds of the men who knew that the existence of a wire, of a train of a job, of themselves and their actions was an absolute not to be escaped When such minds were gone, a two-thousand ton train was left at the mercy of the muscles of her legs.

Tired?—she thought, even the strain of walking was a value, a small piece of reality in the stillness around them The sensation of effort was a specific experience, it was pain and could be nothing else—in the midst of a space which was neither light nor dark, a soil which neither gave nor resisted, a fog which neither moved nor hung still Their strain was the only evidence of their motion nothing changed in the emptiness around them, nothing took form to mark their progress She had always wondered, in incredulous contempt, about the sects that preached the annihilation of the universe as the ideal to be attained *There*, she thought, was their world and the content of their minds made real.

When the green light of a signal appeared by the track, it gave them a point to reach and pass, but—incongruous in the midst of the floating dissolution—it brought them no sense of relief It seemed to come from a long since extinguished world, like those stars whose light remains after they are gone The green circle glowed in space, announcing a clear track, inviting motion where

t rome ror tonne that ne not prove ne but t iction Glancing
a man braced
were the sole
figures fighting,

oduced a package of cigarettes and extended it to her
e was about to take a cigarette—then, suddenly, she seized his
and tore the package out of his hand It was a plain white

age in her hands She caught a glimpse of his face he looked
tle astonished and very amused
here was no printing on the package, no trade name, no address,
' the dollar sign stamped in gold The cigarettes bore the same

Where did you get this?" she asked
le was smiling "If you know enough to ask that, Miss Taggart,
should know that I won't answer "
I know that this stands for something "
The dollar sign? For a great deal It stands on the vest of
ry fat, piglike figure in every cartoon, for the purpose of denoting
rook, a grafter, a scoundrel—as the one sure fire brand of evil
stands—as the money of a free country—for achievement, for
cess, for ability, for man's creative power—and, precisely for
se reasons it is used as a brand of infamy It stands stamped
the forehead of a man like Hank Rearden, as a mark of damna-
n. Incidentally, do you know where that sign comes from? It
nds for the

d not move to go, she

you know that the United States is the only country in
story that has ever used its own monogram as a symbol of de
avity? Ask yourself why Ask yourself how long a country that
d that could hope to exist, and whose moral standards have
stroyed it It was the only country in history where wealth was
ot acquired by looting, but by production not by force, but by
rade, the only country whose money was the symbol of man's
ight to his own mind, to his work, to his life, to his happiness,
o himself If this is evil, by the present standards of the world,
f this is the reason for damning us then we—we, the dollar
chasers and makers—accept it and choose to be damned by that
world We choose *to wear the sign of the dollar on our foreheads,*

proudly as our badge of nobility—the badge we are willing to live for and if need be to die

He extended his hand for the package She held it as if her fingers would not let it go but gave up and placed it on his palm With deliberate slowness as if to underscore the meaning of his gesture, he offered her a cigarette She took it and placed it between her lips. He took one for himself struck a match lighted both and they walked on

They walked over rotting logs that sank without resistance into the shifting ground through a vast uncongealed globe of moonlight and coil ng mist—with two spots of living fire in their hands and the glow of two small circles to light their faces

Fire a dangerous force tamed at his fingertips " she re membered the old man saying to her the old man who had said that these cigarettes were not made anywhere on earth "When a man thinks there is a spot of fire alive in his mind—and it s proper that he should have the burning point of a cigarette as his one expression

"I wish you d tell me who makes them " she said in the tone of a hopeless plea

He chuckled good naturedly I can tell you this much they re made by a friend of mine for sale but—not being a common car rier—he sells them only to his friends "

"Sell me that package will you?"

"I don t think you ll be able to afford it Miss Taggart, but—all right if you wish

"How much is it?

"Five cents "

"Five cents? she repeated bewildered

"Five cents— he said and added in gold "

She stopped staring at him "In gold?

"Yes Miss Taggart

"Well what s your rate of exchange? How much is it in our normal money?"

"There is no rate of *excl ange* Miss Taggart No amount of physi cal—or spiritual—currency whose sole standard of value is the decree of Mr Wesley Mouch will buy these cigarettes "

"I see

He reached into h s pocket took out the package and handed it to her "I'll give them to you Miss Taggart " he said "because you ve earned them many times over—and because you need them for the same purpose we do

"What purpose?"

"To remind us—in moments of discouragement in the loneliness of exile—of our true homeland which has always been yours too Miss Taggart "

"Thank you " she said She put the cigarettes in her pocket he saw that her hand was trembling.

When they reached the fourth of the five mileposts they had been s lent for a long t me with no strength left for anything but the effort of mov ng their feet Far ahead they saw a dot of light too low

the horizon and too harshly clear to be a star. They kept watch-
it, as they walked, and said nothing until they became certain
t it was a powerful electric beacon blazing in the midst of the

to know that the thought was hope

They found the telephone box at the fifth milepost. The beacon
ng like a violent spot of cold fire, less than half a mile farther
uth.

The telephone was working. She heard the buzz of the wire, like
e breath of a living creature, when she lifted the receiver Then
drawling voice answered, "Jessup, at Bradshaw." The voice
unded sleepy.

"This is Dagny Taggart, speaking from—"

"Who?"

"Dagny Taggart, of Taggart Transcontinental, speaking—"

"Oh . . Oh yes . . . I see . . . Yes?"

"—speaking from your track phone Number 83 The Comet is
talled seven miles north of here. It's been abandoned The crew
as deserted."

There was a pause "Well, what do you want me to do about it?"

She had to pause in turn, in order to believe it. "Are you the
ight dispatcher?"

"Yeah."

"Then send another crew out to us at once."

"A full passenger train crew?"

"Of course."

"Now?"

"Yes."

There . .

about that."

"Listen," she said slowly, fighting for patience, "do you understand that there's a train, a passenger limited, abandoned in the middle of the prairie?"

"Yeah, but how am I to know what I'm supposed to do about it? The rules don't provide for it. Now if you had an accident, we'd send out the wrecker, but if there was no accident . you dont need the wrecker, do you?"

"No We dont need the wrecker We need men. Do you understand? Living men to run an engine"

"The rules don't say anything about a train without men Or about men without a train There's no rule for calling out a full

crew in the middle of the night and sending them to hunt for a [illegible]

[illegible] e to do?"

"My job is to obey the rules If I send out a crew when I'm not supposed to, God only knows what's going to happen! What with the Unification Board and all the regulations they've got nowadays, who am I to take it upon myself?"

"And what's going to happen if you leave a train stalled on the line?"

"That's not my fault I had nothing to do with it They can't blame me I couldn't help it."

"You're to help it now."

"Nobody told me to"

"*I'm* telling you to!"

"How do I know whether you're supposed to tell me or not? [illegible] people were [illegible]"

[illegible] aw Kellogg [illegible] the Comet [illegible]

"Oh, sure But nobody's going to make any trouble about that. No train's ever on schedule these days"

"Then do you intend to leave us blocking your track forever?"

"We've got nothing due till Number 4, the northbound passenger out of Laurel, at eight thirty seven A M You can wait till then The day trick dispatcher will be on then. You can speak to him"

"You blasted idiot! This is *the Comet!*"

"What's that to me? This isn't Taggart Transcontinental. You people expect a lot for your money You've been nothing but a headache to us, with all the extra work at no extra pay for the little fellows." His voice was slipping into whining insolence "You can't talk to me that way The time's past when you could talk to people that way"

She had never believed that there were men with whom a certain method, which she had never used, would work, such men were not hired by Taggart Transcontinental and she had never been forced to deal with them before

"Do you know who I am?" she asked, in the cold, overbearing tone of a personal threat.

It worked. "I . . I guess so," he answered

"Then let me tell you that if you don't send a crew to me at once, you'll be out of a job within one hour after I reach Bradshaw, which I'll reach sooner or later. You'd better make it sooner"

"Yes ma'am," he said

"Call out a full passenger train crew and give them orders to

— — to Laurel, where we have our own men"
;, ma'am." He added, "Will you tell headquarters that it was
ho told me to do it?"
ill."
d that it's you who're responsible for it?"
m"
re was a pause, then he asked helplessly "Now how am I
to call the men? Most of them haven't got any phones."
you have a call boy?"
s, but he won't get here till morning"
there anybody in the yards right now?"
ere's the wiper in the roundhouse."
nd *him* out to call the men."
s, ma'am Hold the line"
leaned against the side of the phone box, to wait. Kellogg
miling
nd you propose to run a railroad—a transcontinental rail-
—with *that?*" he asked.
e shrugged.
e could not keep her eyes off the beacon It seemed so close
asily within her reach. She felt as if the unconfessed thought
struggl...

is . . . in just a few hours. . What if there was no need
hurry to him? It was what she wanted to do It was all she
ted. . . . Her work? What was her work to move on to the
st, most exacting use of her mind—or to spend the rest of her
doing his thinking for a man unfit to be a night dispatcher?
y had she chosen to work? Was it in order to remain where she
started—night operator of Rockdale Station—no, lower than
—she had been better than that dispatcher, even at Rockdale—
s this to be the final sum: an end lower than her beginning?
ere was no reason to hurry? *She* was the reason. . . They
ded the trains, but they did not need the motor? *She* needed
motor . . . Her duty? To whom?
The dispatcher was gone for a long time, when he came back,
voice sounded sulky "Well, the wiper says he can get the men
night, but it's no use, because how am I going to send them
it to you? We have no engine."
"No engine?"
"No The superintendent took one to run down to Laurel, and
e other's in the shops, been there for weeks, and the switch engine
mped a rail this morning, they'll be working on her till tomorrow
fternoon."
"What about the wrecker's engine that you were offering to
nd us?"
"Oh, she's up north. They had a wreck there yesterday. She hasn't
ome back yet"
"Have you a Diesel car?"

"Never had any such thing Not around here."
'Have you a track motor car?"
"Yes We have that.'
"Send them out on the track motor car."
'Oh Yes ma am '
"Tell your men to stop here, at track phone Number 83, to pick up Mr Kellogg and myself, she was looking at the beacon.
"Yes, ma am
"Call the Taggart trainmaster at Laurel, report the Comet s delay and explain to him what happened" She put her hand into her pocket and suddenly clutched her fingers she felt the package of cigarettes "Say— she asked, "what s that beacon, about half a mile from here?
'From where you are? Oh, that must be the emergency landing field of the Flagship Airlines"
'I see Well that s all Get your men started at once. Tell them to pick up Mr Kellogg by track phone Number 83"
"Yes ma am"
She hung up Kellogg was grinning.
"An airfield, isn t it? he asked
"Yes She stood looking at the beacon, her hand still clutching the cigarettes in her pocket
"So they re going to pick up *Mr Kellogg*, are they?"
She whirled to him realizing what decision her mind had been reaching without her conscious knowledge "No," she said, "no I didn't mean to abandon you here Its only that I too have a [illegible] ing"

[illegible]

But I—
"If there's anything you want to do more urgently than to nurse the [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] to your man at Laurel"
"Thank you . . But if you re hoping . . . I m not deserting, you know"
"I know"
"Then why are you so eager to help me?"
"I just want you to see what it s like to do something *you* want, for once"
"There s not much chance that they'll have a plane at that field."
"There s a good chance that they will"
There were two planes on the edge of the airfield one the half charred remnant of a wreck, not worth salvaging for scrap—the other, a Dwight Sanders monoplane, brand new, the kind of ship that men were pleading for, in vain, all over the country
There was one sleepy attendant at the airfield young, pudgy, and, but for a faint smell of college about his vocabulary, a brain brother of the night dispatcher of Bradshaw He knew nothing about the two planes they had been there when he first took this

b a year ago He had never inquired about them and neither id anybody else In whatever silent crumbling had gone on at the stant headquarters, in the slow dissolution of a great airline ompany, the Sanders monoplane had been forgotten—as assets f this nature were being forgotten everywhere . as the model f the motor had been forgotten on a junk pile and, left in plain ght, had conveyed nothing to the inheritors and the takers-ver .

There were no rules to tell the young attendant whether he was xpected to keep the Sanders plane or not. The decision was made or him by the brusque, confident manner of the two strangers—by he credentials of Miss Dagny Taggart, Vice-President of a railroad —by brief hints about a secret, emergency mission which sounded ike Washington to him—by the mention of an agreement with the airline's top officials in New York, whose names he had never heard before—by a check for fifteen thousand dollars, written by Miss Taggart, as deposit against the return of the Sanders plane—and by another check, for two hundred bucks, for his own, personal courtesy

He fueled the plane, he checked it as best he could, he found a map of the country's airports—and she saw that a landing field on the outskirts of Afton, Utah, was marked as still in existence. She had been too tensely, swiftly active to feel anything, but at the last moment, when the attendant switched on the floodlights, when she was about to climb aboard, she paused to glance at the emptiness of the sky, then at Owen Kellogg He stood, alone in the white glare his feet planted firmly apart, on an island of cement in a ring of blinding lights, with nothing beyond the ring but an irredeemable night—and she wondered which one of them was taking the greater chance and facing the more desolate emptiness.

"In case anything happens to me," she said, "will you tell Eddie Willers in my office to give Jeff Allen a job as I promised?"

"I will. Is this all you wish to be done in case anything happens?"

She considered it and smiled sadly, in astonishment at the realization. "Yes, I guess that's all Except, tell Hank Rearden what happened and that I asked you to tell him"

"I will."

She lifted her head and said firmly, 'I don't expect it to happen, however When you reach Laurel, call Winston, Colorado, and tell them that I will be there tomorrow by noon."

"Yes, Miss Taggart."

She wanted to extend her hand in parting but it seemed inadequate, and then she remembered what he had said about times of loneliness She took out the package and silently offered him one of his own cigarettes His smile was a full statement of understanding, and the small flame of his match lighting their two cigarettes was their most enduring handshake

Then she climbed aboard—and the next span of her consciousness was not separate moments and movements, but the sweep of a single motion and a single unit of time, a progression

entity, like the notes of a piece of music from the touch of her hand on the starter—to the blast of the motor's sound that broke off like a mountain rockslide, all contact with the time behind her—to the circling fall of a blade that vanished in a fragile sparkle of whirling air that cut the space ahead—to the start for the runway—to the brief pause—then to the forward thrust—to the long, perilous run, the run not to be obstructed, the straight line run that gathers power by spending it on a harder and harder and ever accelerating effort, the straight line to a purpose—to the moment, unnoticed, when the earth drops off and the line, unbroken, goes on into space in the simple, natural act of rising

She saw the telegraph wires of the trackside slipping past at the tip of her toes The earth was falling downward, and she felt as if its weight were dropping off her ankles, as if the globe would go shrinking to the size of a ball, a convict s ball she had dragged and lost. Her body swayed, drunk with the shock of a discovery and her craft rocked with her body, and it was the earth below that reeled with the rocking of her craft—the discovery that her life was now in her own hands, that there was no necessity to argue, to explain to teach, to plead, to fight—nothing but to see and think and act Then the earth steadied into a wide sheet that grew wider and wider as she circled, rising When she glanced down for the last time the lights of the field were extinguished, there was only the single beacon left and it looked like the tip of Kellogg's cigarette glowing as a last salute in the darkness

Then she was left with the lights on her instrument panel and the spread of stars beyond her film of glass There was nothing to support her but the beat of the engine and the minds of the men who had made the plane But what else supports one anywhere?—she thought

The line of her course went northwest, to cut a diagonal across the state of Colorado She knew she had chosen the most dangerous route, over too long a stretch of the worst mountain barrier—but it was the shortest line, and safety lay in altitude, and no mountains seemed dangerous compared to the dispatcher of Bradshaw

The stars were like foam and the sky seemed full of flowing motion, the motion of bubbles settling and forming, the floating of circular waves without progression. A spark of light flared up on earth once in a while, and it seemed brighter than all the static blue above But it hung alone between the black of ashes and the blue of a crypt, it seemed to fight for its fragile foothold, it greeted her and went

The pale streak of a river came rising slowly from the void, and for a long stretch of time it remained in sight, gliding imperceptibly to meet her It looked like a phosphorescent vein showing through the skin of the earth, a delicate vein without blood.

When she saw the lights of a town, like a handful of gold coins flung upon the prairie, the brightly violent lights fed by an electric current, they seemed as distant as the stars and now as unattainable The energy that had lighted them was gone, the power that power stations in empty prairies had vanished, and she

knew of no journey to recapture it. Yet these had been her stars—she thought, looking down—these had been her goal her beacon, the aspiration drawing her upon her upward course That which

had been the height she had wanted to reach, and she wondered how she had come to lose it, who had made of it a convict's ball to drag through muck who had turned its promise of greatness into a vision never to be reached But the town was past and she had to look ahead to the mountains of Colorado rising in her way

The small glass dial on her panel showed that she was now climbing. The sound of the engine, beating through the metal shell around her, trembling in the wheel against her palms like the pounding of a heart strained to a solemn effort told her of the power carrying her above the peaks The earth was now a crumpled sculpture that swayed from side to side the shape of an explosion

her downward, she fought the sudden gusts that tipped the earth as if she were about to roll off into the sky with half of the mountains rolling after It was like fighting a frozen ocean where the touch of a single spray would be fatal

There were stretches of rest when the mountains shrank down over valleys filled with fog Then the fog rose higher to swallow the earth and she was left suspended in space left motionless but for the sound of the engine

But she did not need to see the earth The instrument panel was now her power of sight—it was the condensed sight of the best minds able to guide her on her way Their condensed sight, she thought. offered to

How

milk

ment.

had they received in return? Where were they now? Where was Dwight Sanders? Where was the inventor of her motor?

The fo[illegible] she saw a drop

of fi[illegible] as a

lonel[illegible] was

and

She was coming close to her goal. Somewhere behind her, in the northeast, stood the summits pierced by the Taggart Tunnel. The mountains were sliding in a long descent into the steadier soil of Utah. She let her plane slip closer to the earth.

The stars [illegible] darker but in the

bank [illegible] pea-

first [illegible] b

that

light, the first hints of the coming sunrise. They kept appearing and vanishing slowly growing clearer, leaving the sky darker, then breaking it wider apart, like a promise struggling to be fulfilled. She heard a piece of music beating in her mind, one she seldom liked to recall not Halley's Fifth Concerto, but his Fourth, the cry of a tortured struggle, with the chords of its theme breaking through like a distant vision to be reached

She saw the Afton airport from across a span of miles, first as a square of sparks, then as a sunburst of white rays It was lighted for a plane about to take off, and she had to wait for her landing. Circling in the outer darkness above the field, she saw the silver body of a plane rising like a phoenix out of the white fire and—in a straight line almost leaving an instant's trail of light to hang in space behind it—going off toward the east

Then she swept down in its stead, to dive into the luminous funnel of beams—she saw a strip of cement flying at her face, she felt the jolt of the wheels stopping it in time, then the streak of her motion ebbing out and the plane being tamed to the safety of a car, as it taxied smoothly off the runway

It was a small private airfield, serving the meager traffic of a few industrial concerns still remaining in Afton She saw a lone attendant hurrying to meet her She leaped down to the ground the moment the plane stood still, the hours of the flight swept from her mind by the impatience over the stretch of a few more minutes

"Can I get a car somewhere to drive me to the Institute of Technology at once? she asked

The attendant looked at her, puzzled. 'Why, yes, I guess so, ma'am But but what for? There s nobody there."

"Mr Quentin Daniels is there "

The attendant shook his head slowly—then jerked his thumb, pointing east to the shrinking taillights of the plane. "There s Mr Daniels going now "

"*What?*

"He just left "

"Left? Why?"

"He went with the man who flew in for him two three hours ago"

"What man?"

'Don t know, never saw him before, but, boy!—he's got a beauty of a ship!

She was back at the wheel, she was speeding down the runway, she was rising into the air, her plane like a bullet aimed at two sparks of red and green light that were twinkling away into the eastern sky—while she was still repeating, "Oh no, they don't! They don t! They don t! They don t!"

Once and for all—she thought, clutching the wheel as if it were the enemy not to be relinquished, her words like separate explosions with a trail of fire in her mind to link them—once and for all . to meet the destroyer face to face . to learn who he is and where he goes to vanish not the motor . . . he is not to carry the motor away into the darkness of his monstrously closed unknown . . . he is not to escape, this time . . .

A band of light was rising in the east and it seemed to come from the earth, as a breath long held and released. In the deep blue above it, the stranger's plane was a single spark changing color and flashing from side to side, like the tip of a pendulum swinging in the darkness, beating time.

The curve of distance made the spark drop closer to the earth, and she pushed her throttle wide open, not to let the spark out of her sight, not to let it touch the horizon and vanish. The light was flowing into the sky, as if drawn from the earth by the stranger's plane. The plane was headed southeast, and she was following it into the [illegible]

[illegible]

earth. The clouds were dropping away in long shreds of smoky blue She kept her eyes on the stranger's plane as if her glance were a towline pulling her ship. The stranger's plane was now a small black cross, like a shrinking check mark on the glowing sky

Then she noticed that the clouds were not dropping, that they stood congealed on the edge of the earth—and she realized that the plane was headed toward the mountains of Colorado, that the struggle against the invisible storm lay ahead for her once more. She noted it without emotion, she did not wonder whether her ship or her body had the power to attempt it again. So long as she was able to move, she would move to follow the speck that was fleeing away with the last of her world She felt nothing but the emptiness left by a fire that had been hatred and anger and the desperate impulse of a fight to the kill these had fused into a single icy streak, the single resolve to follow the stranger, whoever he was, wherever he took her to follow and she added nothing in her mind, but, unstated, what lay at the bottom of the emptiness was and give her life, if she could take his first.

Like an instrument set to automatic control, her body was performing the motions of driving the plane—with the mountains reeling in a bluish fog below and the dented peaks rising in her path as smoky formations of a deadlier blue She noticed that the distance to the stranger's plane had shrunk he had checked his speed for the dangerous crossing, while she had gone on, unconscious of the danger, with only the muscles of her arms and legs fighting to keep her plane aloft. A brief, tight movement of her lips was as close as she could come to a smile it was he who was flying her plane for her, she thought, he had given her the power to follow him with a somnambulist's unerring skill

As if responding of itself to his control, the needle of her altimeter was slowly moving upward. She was rising and she went on rising and she wondered when her breath and her propeller would fail He was going southeast, toward the highest mountains that obstructed the path of the sun.

It was his plane that was struck by the first sunray It flashed for an instant, like a burst of white fire, sending rays to shoot

from its wings The peaks of the mountains came next she saw the sunlight reaching the snow in the crevices, then trickling down the granite sides, it cut violent shadows on the ledges and brought the mountains into the living finality of a form

They were flying over the wildest stretch of Colorado, uninhabited uninhabitable inaccessible to men on foot or plane No landing was possible within a radius of a hundred miles she glanced at her fuel gauge she had one half hour left The stranger was heading straight toward another, higher range She wondered why he chose a course no air route did or ever would travel She wished this range were behind her, it was the last effort she could hope to make

The stranger s plane was suddenly slacking its speed He was losing altitude just when she had expected him to climb The granite barrier was rising in his path, moving to meet him, reaching for his wings—but the long smooth line of his motion was sliding down. She could detect no break, no jolt, no sign of mechanical failure it looked like the even movement of a controlled intention. With a sudden flash of sunlight on its wings, the plane banked into a long curve rays dripping like water from its body—then went into the broad smooth circles of a spiral, as if circling for a landing where no landing was conceivable

She watched not trying to explain it, not believing what she saw, waiting for the upward thrust that would throw him back on his course But the easy gliding circles went on dropping, toward a ground she could not see and dared not think of Like remnants of broken jaws strings of granite dentures stood between her ship and his, she could not tell what lay at the bottom of his spiral motion She knew only that it did not look like, but was certain to be, the motion of a suicide

She saw the sunlight glitter on his wings for an instant Then, like the body of a man diving chest first and arms outstretched, serenely abandoned to the sweep of the fall, the plane went down and vanished behind the ridges of rock

She flew on almost waiting for it to reappear, unable to believe that she had witnessed a horrible catastrophe taking place so simply and quietly She flew on to where the plane had dropped It seemed to be a valley in a ring of granite walls

She reached the valley and looked down There was no possible place for a landing There was no sign of a plane

The bottom of the valley looked like a stretch of the earth s crust mangled in the days when the earth was cooling left irretrievable ever since It was a stretch of rocks ground against one another, with boulders hanging in precarious formations with long dark crevices and a few contorted pine trees growing half horizontally into the air There was no level piece of soil the size of a handkerchief There was no place for a plane to hide. There was no remnant of a plane's wreck.

She banked sharply, circling above the valley, dropping down a little By some trick of light, which she could not explain the floor of the valley seemed more clearly visible than the rest of the

around her—
t was a quiet
of the Rocky
ıpproach, and,

with the last of her fuel burning away, she was looking for a plane that had never existed, in quest of a destroyer who had vanished as he always vanished, perhaps it was only his vision that had led her here to be destroyed. In the next moment, she shook her head, pressed her mouth tighter and dropped farther

She thought that she could not abandon an incalculable wealth such as the brain of Quentin Daniels on one of those rocks below, if he was still alive and within her reach to help She had dropped inside the circle of the valley's walls It was a dangerous job of flying, the space was much too tight, but she went on circling and dropping lower, her life hanging on her eyesight, and her eyesight flashing between two tasks searching the floor of the valley and watching the granite walls that seemed about to rip her wings.

She knew the danger only as part of the job It had no personal meaning any longer. The savage thing she felt was almost enjoyment. It was the last rage of a lost battle No!—she was crying in her mind, crying it to the destroyer, to the world she had left, to the years behind her, to the long progression of defeat—No! . . . No! . No! . . .

Her eyes swept past the instrument panel—and then she sat still but for the sound of a gasp Her altimeter had stood at 11,000 feet the last time she remembered seeing it Now it stood at 10,000 But the floor of the valley had not changed It had come no closer. It rema... d... ... down

round in
descent
too clear

and too close from the height, was now too dim and too far She was looking at the same rocks from the same perspective they had grown no larger, their shadows had not moved and the oddly unnatural light still hung over the bottom of the valley

... d she went on circling
she saw the
ains growing
the floor of
ing down a

well with a bottom never to be reached The needle moved to 9,500—to 9,300—to 9,000—to 8,700

... It was as if the air
blinding cold
her hands off
ant, when

seized the wheel again, the light was gone, but her ship was spinn... her ears were bursting with silence and her propeller stood

straight before her her motor was dead

She tried to pull for a r se, but the ship was go ng down—and what she saw flying at her face was not the spread of mangled boulders but the green grass of a field where no field had been before

There was no time to see the rest There was no time to think of explanations There was no time to come out of the spin The earth was a green ceil ng coming down upon her a few hundred swiftly shrinking feet away

Flung from side to side like a battered pendulum clinging to the wheel half in her seat half on her knees she fought to pull the ship into a glide for an attempt to make a belly landing while the green ground was whirling about her sweeping above her then below its spiral coils coming closer Her arms pulling at the wheel,

with her space

violent purity

een hers In a

u oment s consecration to her love—to her rebell ous denial of dis aster to her love of life and of the matchless value that was herself—she felt the fiercely proud certainty that she would survive

And in answer to the earth that flew to meet her she heard in her m nd as her mockery at fate as her cry of defiance the words of the sentence she hated—the words of defeat of despair and of a plea for help

"Oh hell! Who is John Galt?

Chapter 1 ATLANTIS

When she opened her eyes, she saw sunlight, green leaves and a
man' ... the world
she l
and
like
words. But of course

She was looking up at the face of a man who knelt by her side, and she knew that in all the years behind her, *this* was what she would have ... mark of pain
... more: it was
... of his cheeks
made her think of arrogance, of tension, of scorn—yet the face had none of these qualities, it had their final sum a look of serene
... less innocence
... face that had
... being seen or
... him was the
... as faculty of
sight were his best loved tool and its exercise were a limitless, joyous adventure, as if his eyes imparted a superlative value to himself and to the world—to himself for his ability to see, to the world for being a place so eagerly worth seeing. It seemed to her for a moment that she was in the presence of a being who was pure
... body

and his eyes completing the colors, as the one part of the casting left undimmed and harshly lustrous: his eyes were the deep, dark green of light glinting on metal. He was looking down at her with the faint trace of a smile, it was not a look of discovery, but of familiar contemplation—as if he, too, were seeing the long-expected and the never-doubted.

This was her world she thought, this was the way men were meant to be and to face their existence—and all the rest of it, all the years of ugliness and struggle were only someone's senseless joke She smiled at him as at a fellow conspirator in relief in deliverance in radiant mockery of all the things she would never have to consider important again He smiled in answer it was the same smile as her own as if he felt what she felt and knew what she meant.

"We never had to take any of it seriously, did we?" she whispered.

"No, we never had to"

And then, her consciousness returning fully, she realized that this man was a total stranger

it move

tried to

"I've known you for many years"

"Have I known you?"

"Yes I think so"

"What is your name?"

"John Galt."

She looked at him not moving

"Why are you frightened?" he asked

"Because I believe it."

He smiled, as if grasping a full confession of the meaning she ttached to his name the smile held an adversary's acceptance of a

e knew only that it stood for a ...

ould slowly have to fill She could not do it now this man was o blinding a presence like a spotlight that would not let her see e shapes strewn in the outer darkness

"Was it you that I was following?" she asked

"Yes"

She glanced slowly around her She was lying in the grass of a ld at the foot of a granite drop that came down from thousands feet away in the blue sky On the other edge of the field some ags and pines and the glittering leaves of birch trees hid the space at stretched to a distant wall of encircling mountains Her plane s not shattered—it was there, a few feet away flat on its belly in grass There was no other plane in sight, no structures, no sign human habitation.

"What is this valley? she asked

He smiled "The Taggart Terminal"

"What do you mean?

"You'll find out"

A dim impulse, like the recoil of an antagonist made her w check on what strength was left to her She could move her

and legs, she could lift her head, she felt a stabbing pain when she breathed deeply, she saw a thin thread of blood running down her stocking

"Can one get out of this place?" she asked

His voice seemed earnest, but the glint of the metal green eyes was a smile "Actually—no Temporarily—yes"

S

her

str

collapsed against him the instant her feet rested on the ground

uld not hold her

you can't, Miss Tag

she thought For

right to surrender

yourself to feel . When had she experienced it before— wondered, there had been a moment when these had been the word in her mind but she could not remember it now. She had known once—this feeling of certainty, of the final, the reached, the not to and to feel that

her strength . Aware with abnormal intensity of the pressure his hands against her body, of the gold and copper threads of hair, the shadows of his lashes on the skin of his face a few inch away from hers, she wondered dimly· Protected, from what? . . it's he who was the enemy . . was he? . . . why? . . . She did know, she could not think of it now It took an effort to remem ber that she had had a goal and a motive a few hours ago forced herself to recapture it

"Did you know that I was following you?" she asked.

"No"

I looked dov

Th

He glanced at the sky "Look carefully. Do you see anything there?"

She dropped her head back, looking straight into the sky, see nothing but the peaceful blue of morning After a while she dist guished a few faint strips of shimmering air.

"Heat waves," she said

"Refractor rays," he answered "The valley bottom that you saw a mountain top eight thousand feet high, five miles away from her

"A . . what?"

"A mountain top that no flyer would ever choose for a landi

at you saw was its reflection projected over this valley"
"How?"
"By the same method as a mirage on a desert an image refracted m a layer of heated air"
"How?"
"By a screen of rays calculated against everything—except a rage such as yours
"What do you mean?"
"I never thought that any plane would attempt to drop within en hundred feet of the ground. You hit the ray screen. Some of rays are the kind that kill magnetic motors Well thats the sec d time you beat me I've never been followed, either"
"Why do you keep that screen?"
"Because this place is private property intended to remain as h."
"What is this place?"
"I'll show it to you, now that you're here, Miss Taggart. I'll swer questions after you've seen it."
She remained silent She noticed that she had asked questions out every subject but not about him It was as if he were a single bole, grasped by her first glance at him like some irreducible solute, like an axiom not to be explained any further as if she ew everything about him by direct perception, and what awaited r now was only the process of identifying her knowledge.
He was carrying her down a narrow trail that went winding to e bottom of the valley On the slopes around them the tall dark ramids of firs stood immovably straight in masculine simplicity, e sculpture reduced to an essential form and they clashed with e complex, feminine overdetailed lace-work of the birch leaves embling in the sun. The leaves let the sunrays fall through to eep across his hair, across both their faces She could not see hat lay below, beyond the turns of the trail
Her eyes kept coming back to his face He glanced down at her nce in a while At first, she looked away as if she had been caught. hen, as if learning it from him, she held his glance whenever he hose to look ... hat she felt and that

... own. He
... arrying a
ounded woman. It was an embrace even though she felt no sug
... ier certainty

... the fragile
... The sound
... rhythm that
... went past
... water but
other sound seemed to grow clearer, rising not in her mind but rom somewhere among the leaves The trail turned and in a earing she saw a small house on a ledge below with a n on the pane of an open window In the moment when she

what experience had once made her want to surrender to the imme diate present—it had been the night in a dusty coach of the Comet

Yes

When did he write it?'

"Why don t you ask him that in person?"

"Is he here?

"It's he who s playing it That's his house"

'Oh !

You ll meet him later He'll be glad to speak to you He knows that his works are the only records you like to play, in the evening, when you are alone

How does he know that?"

'I told him

The look on her face was like a question that would have begun with How in hell ? —but she saw the look of his eyes and she laughed her laughter giving sound to the meaning of his glance.

She could not question anything she thought, she could not doubt, not now—not with the sound of that music rising triumphantly

valley and the morning sun and—

And then she gasped, because the trail had turned and from the height of an open ledge she saw the town on the floor of the valley

It was not a town only a cluster of houses scattered at random from the bottom to the rising steps of the mountains that went on rising above their roofs, enclosing them within an abrupt, impassable circle They were homes small and new, with naked, angular shapes and the glitter of broad windows Far in the distance, some structures seemed taller and the faint coils of smoke above them suggested an industrial district But close before her, rising on a slender granite column from a ledge below to the level of her eyes blinding her by its glare dimming the rest, stood a dollar sign three feet tall, made of solid gold It hung in space above the town, as its coat-of-arms its trademark, its beacon—and it caught the sunrays like some transmitter of energy that sent them in shining blessing to stretch horizontally through the air above the roofs

"What s that?" she gasped pointing at the sign.

he answer.

"He gave that sign as an anniversary present to the owner of this ace And then we all adopted it as our particular emblem We ked the idea"

"Aren't you the owner of this place?"

"I? No," He [illegible] the foot of the ledge and added

[illegible]

irrying her down to meet them

She met them when they emerged suddenly from behind a rocky orner a few feet away The sight of their faces hit her with the bruptness of a *collision*

"Well, I'll be goddamned!" said the muscular man whom she did ot know, staring at her

[illegible]

"In whose arms?"

"Why, the inventor of the motor"

She gasped, closing her eyes, this was one connection she knew he *should* have made When she opened her eyes she was looking at Galt. He was smiling faintly, derisively as if he knew fully what his meant to her

"It would have served you right if you'd broken your neck!" the muscular man snapped at her, with the anger of concern almost of affection. "What a stunt to pull—for a person who'd have been admitted here so eagerly, if she'd chosen to come through the front door!"

"Miss Taggart, may I present Midas Mulligan? said Galt

"Oh," she said weakly, and laughed, she had no capacity for astonishment any longer "Do you suppose I was killed in that crash—and this is some other kind of existence?"

"*It is* another kind of existence," said Galt "But as for being killed, doesn't it seem more like the other way around?"

"Oh yes," she whispered, "yes " She smiled at Mulligan "Where is the front door?

"Here," he said, pointing to his forehead

"I've lost the key, she said simply, without resentment. "I've lost all keys, right now"

"You'll find them. But what in blazes were you doing in that plane?"

"Following."

"*Him?*" He pointed at Galt.

"Yes."

"You're lucky to be alive! Are you badly hurt?"

I don t think so "

"You ll have a few questions to answer after they patch you u| He turned brusquely leading the way down to the car then glanc at Galt Well what do we do now? *There s* something we had provided for the first scab

"The first what? she asked

Skip it said Mulligan, and looked at Galt "What do we do "It will be my charge said Galt I will be responsible You ta Quentin Daniels "

Oh he s no problem at all. He needs nothing but to get quainted with the place He seems to know all the rest "

"Yes He had practically gone the whole way by himself " He her watching him in bewilderment and said "There s one thing must thank you for Miss Taggart you did pay me a complime when you chose Quentin Daniels as my understudy He was plausible one "

Where is he?" she asked Will you tell me what happened?"

Why Midas met us at the landing field drove me to my hou and took Daniels with him I was going to join them for breakfa

are I w

rought

—whoever was in that plane I nev dreamed that it was one of the only two persons in the whole wor whom I d exempt.

Who is the other one? she asked.

Hank Rearden "

She winced it was like a sudden blow from another great distanc She wondered why it seemed to her that Galt was watching her fa intently and that she saw an instant s change in his too brief defne

They had come to the car It was a Hammond convertible its t down one of the costliest models some years old but kept in t shining trim of efficient handling Galt placed her cautiously in t back seat and held her in the circle of his arm She felt a stabb pain once in a while but she had no attention to spare for it. S watched the distant houses of the town as Mulligan pressed t starter and the car moved forward as they went past the s gn of t dollar and a golden ray hit her eyes sweeping over her forehead.

"Who is the owner of this place? she asked

"I am " said Mulligan

his two fathers Miss Tagga The one who d dn t betray him "

"Oh!" she sa d as another connect on fell into place "Your fir pupil?"

"That s right "

"The second assistant bookkeeper!" she moaned suddenly at more memory

"What's that?"

"That's what Dr Stadler called him That's what Dr Stadler told

that by the

house that stood on a ridge above the valley She saw a man walking down a path, ahead of them, hastening in the direction of the town. He wore blue denim overalls and carried a lunchbox There was some-

the ... out. As the car

nd she jerked

of the move-

Don't let him

car "Oh

gotten that this

Wyatt was running toward them he had recognized her too

she saw the

n but once

"No" said Galt. "Miss Taggart is a castaway"

"What?"

"Miss Taggart's plane crashed Didn't you see it?"

"Crashed—here?"

"Yes."

"I heard a plane but I . " His look of bewilderment changed a smile, regretful amused and friendly "I see Oh hell, Dagny, s preposterous!"

She was staring at him helplessly unable to reconnect the past to the present. And helplessly—as one would say to a dead friend, in dream, the words one regrets having missed the chance to say in life—she said, with the memory of a telephone ringing unanswered, almost two years ago the words she had hoped to say if she ever aught sight of him again "I I tried to reach you."

He smiled gently "We've been trying to reach you ever since Dagny . I'll see you tonight. Don't worry I won't vanish—and I don't think you will either"

He waved to the others and went off swinging his lunchbox. She glanced up as Mulligan started the car and saw Galt's eyes watching her attentively Her face hardened, as if in open admission of pain and in defiance of the satisfaction it might give him. "All right," she said. "I see what sort of show you want to put me through the shock of witnessing"

But there was neither cruelty nor pity in his face only the level look of justice "Our first rule here Miss Taggart," he answered, "that one must always see for oneself"

send the doctor over" said Mulligan driving off while Galt carried her up the path

"Your house? she asked.

[illegible]

super modern skill

He carried her across the sunrays into a small guest room and placed her down on a bed She noticed a window open upon a long slant of rocky steps and p nes going off into the sky She noticed [illegible]

But you re not. D dn't you name a railroad line after me?"

Oh! Yes It was the small jolt of another connection falling into place "Yes I— She was looking at the tall figure with [illegible] mercilessly

was the figure Yes I did " Then remembering the rest, she added, "But I named it after an enemy"

He smiled "That s the contradiction you had to resolve sooner or later Miss Taggart."

It was you wasn t it? who destroyed my Line

"Why no It was the contradiction

She closed her eyes in a moment she asked "All those stories I heard about you—which of them were true?"

"All of them"

"Was it you who spread them?"

"No What for? I never had any wish to be talked about."

"But you do know that you've become a legend?"

"Yes"

"The young inventor of the Twentieth Century Motor Company is the one real version of the legend isn t it?"

"The one that s concretely real—yes"

She could not say it ind fferently there was st ll a breathless tone and the drop of her vo ce toward a wh sper when she asked "The motor the motor I found it was *you* who made it?"

"Yes"

She could not prevent the jolt of eagerness that threw her head up "The secret of transforming energy—" she began and stopped.

"[illegible] answer to the [illegible]

"[illegible] night . . . twelve years ago . . . a spring night [illegible] walked out of a meeting of six thousand murderers—that story is true, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"You told them that you would stop the motor of the world"

"I have"

"What have you done?"

"I've done *nothing*, Miss Taggart. And that's the whole of my secret."

She looked at him silently for a long moment He stood waiting, as if he could read her thoughts "The destroyer—" she said in a tone of wonder and helplessness

"—the most evil creature that's ever existed," he said in the tone of a quotation, and she recognized her own words, "the man who's draining the brains of the world."

"How thoroughly have you been watching me," she asked, "and [f]or how long?"

It was only an instant's pause his eyes did not move but it seemed [t]o her that his glance was stressed, as if in special awareness of [see]ing her, and she caught the sound of some particular intensity in [h]is voice as he answered quietly, "For years"

She closed her eyes, relaxing and giving up She felt an odd, [li]ght hearted indifference, as if she suddenly wanted nothing but [th]e comfort of surrendering to helplessness

The doctor who arrived was a gray haired man with a mild, [t]houghtful face and a firmly, unobtrusively confident manner

"Miss Taggart, may I present Dr Hendricks?" said Galt.

"Not Dr Thomas Hendricks?" she gasped with the involuntary [r]udeness of a child, the name belonged to a great surgeon, who had [r]etired and vanished six years ago.

"Yes, of course," said Galt.

Dr Hendricks smiled at her, in answer "Midas told me that Miss Taggart has to be treated for shock," he said, "not for the one sustained, but for the ones to come"

"I'll leave you to do it," said Galt, "while I go to the market to get supplies for breakfast."

She [illegible] of Dr Hendricks' work, as he [illegible] ver seen [illegible] torn the [illegible] patches [illegible] bruises spread in purple blotches over her body By the time Dr Hendricks' swift, competent hands had wound the bandages and the tight lacings of tape, she felt as if her body were an engine checked [by an] expert mechanic, and no further care was necessary

"I would advise you to remain in bed, Miss Taggart"

"Oh no! If I'm careful and move slowly, I'll be all r[ight]

'You ought to rest."

Do you think I can?"

He smiled I guess not"

She was dressed by the time Galt came back. Dr Hendricks gave him an account of her condition, adding "I ll be back to check up tomorrow

'Thanks ' said Galt 'Send the bill to me"

"Certainly not! she said indignantly I will pay it myself"

The two men glanced at each other, in amusement, as at the boast of a beggar

We ll discuss that later," said Galt

Dr Hendricks left and she tried to stand up limping, catching at the furniture for support Galt lifted her in his arms carried her to the kitchen alcove and placed her on a chair by the table set for two

She noticed that she was hungry, at the sight of the coffee pot [illegible] white

[illegible] shook her head in helplessly bitter amusement with the tramp, she thought with a desperate voice pleading for escape from an avenger who would not pursue or be found—the avenger who sat facing her across the table drinking a glass of orange juice 'I don't know [illegible] it seems centuries and continents away"

[illegible] man

I remember your plane circling to land But that was the one and only time when I didn t think of you I thought you were coming by train

She asked looking straight at him, 'How do you want me to understand that?"

What?"

"The one and only time when you didn't think of me"

He held her glance, she saw the faint movement she had noted as typical of him the movement of his proudly intractable mouth curving into the hint of a smile "In any way you wish," he answered

She let a moment pass to underscore her choice by the severity of her face then asked coldly, in the tone of an enemy s accusation, "You knew that I was coming for Quentin Daniels?'

"Yes

"You got him first and fast, in order not to let me reach him? In order to beat me—knowing fully what sort of beating that would mean for me?"

"Sure"

It was she who looked away and [illegible] to cook the rest o [illegible]

toasting I [illegible]

kilt abo [illegible]

another profession, his hands moved with the rapid precision of an engineer pulling the levers of a control board. She remembered suddenly where she had seen as expert and preposterous a performance

"Is that what you learned from Dr Akston?" she asked, pointing at the stove

"That, among other things"

"Did he teach you to spend your time—*your* time!—" she could not keep the shudder of indignation out of her voice—"on this sort of work?"

"I've spent time on work of much lesser importance"

When he put her plate before her, she asked, "Where did you get that food? Do they have a grocery store here?"

"The best one in the world. It's run by Lawrence Hammond"

"*What?*"

"Lawrence Hammond, of Hammond Cars The bacon is from the farm of Dwight Sanders—of Sanders Aircraft The eggs and the butter from Judge Narragansett—of the Superior Court of the State of Illinois"

She looked at her plate, bitterly, almost as if she were afraid to touch it [illegible] akfast I'll ever eat consider-

[illegible]

ooters who'll make you pay for it through year after year and leave you to starve in the end."

After a long silence, she asked simply, almost wistfully, "What is it that you're all doing here?"

"Living."

She had never heard that word sound so real

"What is your job?" she asked. "Midas Mulligan said that you work here."

"I'm the handy man, I guess."

"The what?"

"I'm on call whenever anything goes wrong with any of the installations—with the power system, for instance"

She looked at him—and suddenly she tore forward, staring at the electric stove, but fell back on her chair, stopped by pain.

He chuckled. "Yes, that's true—but take it easy or Dr Hendricks will order you back to bed"

"The power system . . " she said, choking, "the power system here . . . it's run by means of your motor?"

"Yes."

"It's [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] at stove It's just a [illegible] t a hundred times [illegible] hance to see,

[illegible]aggart."

"You promised to show me this valley"

"I'll show it to you. But not the power generator."

'Will you take me to see the place now, as soon as we finish?"

'If you wish—and if you're able to move"

'I am '

He got up went to the telephone and dialed a number, "Hello, Midas? Yes He did? Yes, she's all right. . Will you rent me your car for the day? . . Thanks At the usual rate—twenty five cents Can you send it over? . . Do you happen to have some sort of cane? She'll need it . . . Tonight? Yes, I think so We will Thanks"

He hung up She was staring at him incredulously

'Did I understand you to say that Mr Mulligan—who's worth about two hundred million dollars, I believe—is going to charge you twenty five cents for the use of his car?"

"That's right.

"Good heavens couldn't he give it to you as a courtesy?"

He sat looking at her for a moment, studying her face, as if deliberately letting her see the amusement in his "Miss Taggart," he said, we have no laws in this valley, no rules, no formal organization of any kind We come here because we want to rest But we have certain customs which we all observe, because they pertain to the things we need to rest from So I'll warn you now that there is one word which is forbidden in this valley the word *give* "

"I'm sorry she said You're right"

He refilled her cup of coffee and extended a package of cigarettes She smiled, as she took a cigarette it bore the sign of the dollar

"If you're not too tired by evening ' he said, 'Mulligan has invited us for dinner He'll have some guests there whom, I think, you'll want to meet"

"Oh, of course! I won't be too tired I don't think I'll ever feel tired again"

They were finishing breakfast when she saw Mulligan's car stopping in front of the house The driver leaped out, raced up the path and rushed into the room not pausing to ring or knock It took her a moment to realize that the eager, breathless, disheveled young man was Quentin Daniels

"Miss Taggart" he gasped, 'I'm sorry!" The desperate guilt in his voice clashed with the joyous excitement in his face "I've never broken my word before! There's no excuse for it, I can't ask you to forgive me and I know that you won't believe it, but the truth is that I—I forgot!'

She glanced at Galt "I believe you"

"I forgot that I promised to wait I forgot everything—until a few minutes ago when Mr Mulligan told me that you'd crashed here in a plane, and then I knew it was my fault, and if anything had happened to you—oh God are you all right?"

"Yes Don't worry Sit down."

"I don't know how one can forget one's word of honor, I don't know what happened to me"

"I do"

"Miss Taggart, I had been working on it for months, on that one particular hypothesis, and the more I worked, the more hopeless it

said he wanted to speak to me and I asked him to wait and went right on. I think I forgot his presence. I don t know how long he stood there watching me, but what I remember is that suddenly his hand reached over, swept all my figures off the blackboard and wrote one brief equation And then I noticed him! Then I screamed—because it wasn t the full answer to the motor but it was the way to it, a way I hadn t seen hadn't suspected but I knew where it led! I remember I cried How could you know it?—and he answered, pointing at a photograph of your motor I m the man who made it in the first place' And that s the last I remember Miss Taggart—I mean the last I remember of my own existence because after that we talked about static electricity and the conversion of energy and the motor"

"We talked physics all the way down here" said Galt

"Oh, I remember when you asked me whether I d go with you" said Daniels "whether I d be willing to go and never come back and give up everything Everything? Give up a dead Institute that s crumbling back into the jungle give up my future as a janitor-slave-by! ...

...ould have leaped off a skyscraper just to follow him—and to hear his formula before we hit the pavement

"I don t blame you she said she looked at him with a tinge of wistfulness that was almost envy Besides you ve fulfilled your contract. You've led me to the secret of the motor"

"I m going to be a janitor here too said Daniels grinning happily "Mr Mulligan said he d give me the job of janitor—*at the power plant* And when I learn I ll rise to electrician Isn t he great—Midas Mulligan? That s what I want to be when I reach his age I want to make money I want to make millions I want to make as much as he did!"

"Daniels!" She laughed remembering the quiet self-control the strict precision the stern logic of the young scientist she had known "What s the matter with you? Where are you? Do you know what you re saying?"

"I m *here* Miss Taggart—and there s no limit to what s possible here! I m going to be the greatest electrician in the world and the richest! I m going to—

"You re going to go back to Mulligan s house" said Galt sleep for twenty four hours—or I won't let you near the plant."

"Yes sir" said Daniels meekly

The sun had trickled down the peaks and drawn a circle

ing granite and glittering snow to enclose the valley—when t
stepped out of the house She felt suddenly as if nothing exis
beyond that circle, and she wondered at the joyous, proud comf

the other, moving her feet by a slow, conscientious effort,
walked down to the car like a child learning to walk for the f
time.

She sat by Galt's side as he drove, skirting the town, to Mi
Mulligan's house It stood on a ridge, the largest house of the vall
the only one built two stories high, an odd combination of fort
and pleasure resort, with stout granite walls and broad, open t
races He stopped to let Daniels off, then drove on up a wind
road rising slowly into the mountains

It was the thought of Mulligan's wealth, the luxurious car and t
sight of Galt's hands on the wheel that made her wonder for t
first time whether Galt, too, was wealthy She glanced at his cloth
the gray slacks and white shirt seemed of a quality intended t
long wear, the leather of the narrow belt about his waistline w
cracked, the watch on his wrist was a precision instrument, b
made of plain stainless steel The sole suggestion of luxury was t
color of his hair—the strands stirring in the wind like liquid go
and copper

Abruptly, behind a turn of the road, she saw the green acres
pastures stretching to a distant farmhouse. There were herds
sheep, some horses, the fenced squares of pigpens under t
sprawling shapes of

st
h

man came closer, that it was Dwight Sanders.

"Hello, Miss Taggart," he said, smiling

She looked silently at his rolled shirt sleeves, at his heavy boo
at the herds of cattle "So that's all that's left of Sanders Aircraft
she said.

"Why, no There's that excellent monoplane, my best mode
which you flattened

"Oh, t was
wonderf

"You

"I thi

"I can

These were the words and the tone of confidence that she had n
heard for years, this was the manner she had given up expecting-
but the start of her smile ended in a bitter chuckle "How?" sh
asked "On a hog farm?"

"Why, no At Sanders Aircraft."

"Where is it?"

"Where did you think it was? In that building in New Jersey, which Tinky Holloway's cousin bought from my bankrupt successors by means of a government loan and a tax suspension? In that building where he produced six planes that never left the ground and eight that did, but crashed with forty passengers each?"

"Where is it, then?"

"Wherever I am"

He pointed across the road. Glancing down through the tops of the pine trees, she saw the concrete rectangle of an airfield on the

[illegible]

[illegible] without me, they cannot even produce [illegible] acon."

"But you—you have not been designing airplanes, either"

"No, I haven't. And I haven't been manufacturing the Diesel engines I once promised you Since the time I saw you last, I have designed and manufactured just one new tractor I mean, *one*—I tooled it by hand—no mass production was necessary But that tractor has cut an eight-hour workday down to four hours on"—the straight line of his arm, extended to point across the valley, moved like a royal scepter, her eyes followed it and she saw the terraced green of hanging gardens on a distant mountainside—"the chicken and dairy farm of Judge Narragansett"—his arm moved slowly to long, flat stretch of [illegible] then to band [illegible]

Midas M[illegible]

[illegible]ng tiers [illegible]

Her eyes went slowly over the curve his arm had traveled, over and over again, long after the arm had dropped, but she said only, "I see."

"Now [illegible]

[illegible] you, [illegible]nsive [illegible]

"How much?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"Two hundred dollars?" she repeated incredulously, the price seemed much too low

"In gold, Miss Taggart."

"Oh . . . ! Well where can I buy the gold?"

"You can't," said Galt

She jerked her head to face him defiantly "No?"

"No. Not where you come from. Your laws forbid it."

"Yours don't?"

"No"

"Then sell it to me Choose your own rate of exchange Name a sum you want—in my money"

What money? You're penniless, Miss Taggart"

What? It was a word that a Taggart heiress could not expect to hear

You're penniless in this valley You own millions of dollars Taggart Transcontinental stock—but it will not buy one pound bacon from the Sanders hog farm."

"I see

Galt smiled and turned to Sanders "Go ahead and fix that pla Miss Taggart will pay for it eventually

He pressed the starter and drove on, while she sat stiffly strai asking no questions

A stretch of violent turquoise blue split the cliffs ahead, end the road it took her a second to realize that it was a lake. T motionless water seemed to condense the blue of the sky and green of the pine-covered mountains into so brilliantly pure a co that it made the sky look a dimmed pale gray A streak of boil foam came from among the pines and went crashing down the ro steps to vanish in the placid water A small granite structure st by the stream

Galt stopped the car just as a husky man in overalls stepped to the threshold of the open doorway It was Dick McNamara, w had once been her best contractor

Good day Miss Taggart!" he said happily "I'm glad to see you weren't hurt badly

She inclined her head in silent greeting—it was like a greeting the loss and the pain of the past, to a desolate evening and desperate face of Eddie Willers telling her the news of this m disappearance—hurt badly? she thought—I was but not in [illegible] Aloud,

[illegible]

"Used to But we've grown so much in the past year that I've [illegible]

[illegible]

a job because he taught that the inhabitants of slums were not men who made this country—and one is a professor of psychol who couldn't get a job because he taught that men are capabl thinking"

"They work for you as plumbers and linesmen?"

"You'd be surprised how good they are at it"

"And to whom have they abandoned our colleges?"

"To those who re wanted there " He chuckled. "How long ago was it that I betrayed you, Miss Taggart? Not quite three years wasn t it? It's the John Galt Line that I refused to build for you Where is your Line now? But *my* lines have grown, in that time from the couple of miles that Mulligan had built when I took over, to hundreds of miles of pipe and wire, all within the space of this valley "

He saw the swift, involuntary look of eagerness on her face, the look of a competent person s appreciation, he smiled glanced at her

you, he answered firmly

This was the root, she thought, of the guiltlessness of his face he had guessed and named the words she had wanted to spare him, he had rejected a good will that was not based on his values—and in proud certainty of being right, he had made a boast of that which she had intended as an accusation

Ahead of them, she saw a wooden pier projecting into the water of the lake. A

watchi

the car

too sw

knees of her bare legs, she had dark, disheveled hair and large eyes Galt waved to her

"Hello, John! When did you get in?" she called

"This morning " he answered, smiling and driving on.

Dagny jerked her head to look back and saw the glance with which the young woman stood looking after Galt And even though hopelessness, serenely accepted, was part of the worship in that glance, she experienced a feeling she had never known before a stab of jealousy

"Who is that?" she asked

"Our best fishwife She provides the fish for Hammond s grocery market."

"What else is she?"

"You've noticed that there's a 'what else for every one of us here? She s a writer The kind of writer who wouldn't be published outside She believes that when one deals with words, one deals with the mind."

The car turned into a narrow path climbing steeply into a wilder

when she

the

chain of p pes pumps and valves cl mbing like a vine up its narrow ledges but it bore on its crest a huge wooden sign—and the proud violence of the letters announcing their message to an impassable tangle of ferns and pine branches was more characteristic more famil ar than the words Wyatt Oil

It was o l that ran in a glittering curve from the mouth of a pi into a tank at the foot of the wall as the only confess on of the

[illegible] possible

Ellis Wyatt stood on a ridge watching the glass dial of a gauge imbedded in the rock He saw the car stopping below and called, "Hi Dagny! Be with you in a minute!

There were two other men working w th him a big muscular roughneck at a pump halfway up the wall and a young boy by the tank on the ground The young boy had blond hair and a face with an unusual purity of form She felt certain that she knew this face but she could not recall where she had seen t The boy caught her [illegible] almost [illegible] young

[illegible] was the Fifth Concerto by Richard Halley wasn t it?

Sure he answered But do you think I d tell that to a scab?"

"A what?

What am I pay ng you for?" asked Ellis Wyatt approaching the boy chuckled darting back to seize the lever he had abandoned for a moment It s M ss Taggart who couldn t fire you if you loafed on the job I can

'That s one of the reasons why I qu t the railroad Miss Taggart," sa d the boy

"Did you know that I stole him from you?' said Wyatt. "He used to be your best brakeman and now he s my best grease monkey but neither one of us is go ng to hold him permanently"

"Who is?"

"Richard Halley Music He s Halley s best pupil"

She sm led "I know th s is a place where one employs nothing but aristocrats for the lous est kinds of jobs

"They re all aristocrats that s true sa d Wyatt because they know that there s no such th ng as a lousy job—only lousy men who don t care to do it"

The roughneck was watch ng them from above listening wi h cur os ty She glanced up at h m he looked l ke a truck driver so she asked "What were *you* outs de? A professor of comparative ph lology I suppose?"

"No ma am" he answered "I was a truck driver" He added, "But that s not what I wanted to remain"

Ell s Wyatt was looking at the place around them with a kind of

outhful pride eager for acknowledgment it was the pride of a host t a formal *reception* in a drawing room, and the eagerness of an rtist at the *opening* of his show in a gallery She smiled and asked, ointing at the machinery, "Shale oil?"

"Uh huh."

"Thats the *process which* you were working to develop while you ere on earth?" She said it involuntarily and she gasped a little at er own words

He laughed. "While I was in hell—yes I m on earth now"

"How *much* do you produce?"

"Two hundred barrels a day"

A note of sadness came back into her voice "It's the process by which you *once* intended to fill five tank trains a day'

"one gallon of it

is is

but

is as

ke a

into

orgetting what that word means, what it feels like? You should give yourself a chance to relearn it."

"You re hidden in a hole in the wilderness she said bleakly ' and you re *producing* two hundred barrels of oil, when you could have flooded the world with it."

"What for? To feed the looters?"

"No! To earn the fortune you deserve."

world What s wealth but

e can do it

I thats what

improve my methods, and every hour I save is an hour added to my life It used to take me five hours to fill that tank. It now takes three The two I saved are mine—as pricelessly mine as if I moved my grave two further hours away for every five I've got. It s two hours released from one task to be invested in another—two more hours in which to work to grow to move forward Thats the savings account I m hoarding. Is there any sort of safety vault that could protect this account *in* the outside world?"

"But what space do you have for moving forward? Where's your market?"

He chuckled "Market? I now work for use not for profit—*my* use, *not* the looters profit Only those who add to my life not those who devour it, are my market. Only those who produce not those who consume can be anybody s market. I deal with the life-

e,

ld

at

an added minute, hour or day with the bread I buy from them, with the clothes, the lumber, the metal"—he glanced at Galt—"an added year with every month of electricity I purchase That's our market and that's how it works for us—but that was not the way it worked in the outer world Down what drain were they poured out there, our days, our lives and our energy? Into what bottomless, futureless sewer of the unpaid for? Here, we trade achievements, not failures

plant fighting upward from under the weight of a rock—a long, gnarled stem, contorted by an unnatural struggle, with drooping yellow remnants of unformed leaves and a single green shoot thrust

God, no!

"Then don t be astonished by anything you see in this valley"

a man made motion

"Who's the lumberjack around here?" she asked.

"Ted Nielsen"

The road was relaxing into wider curves and gentler grades, among the softer shapes of hillsides She saw a rust brown slope

door.

ucı.

"Hı, Dagny!"

The smiling face that approached her out of the fog was Andrew tockton s and she saw a grimy hand extended to her with a gesture f confident pride, as if it held all of her moment s vision on its alm.

She clasped the hand. "Hello," she said softly, not knowing hether she was greeting the past or the future Then she shook her ead and added, "How come you're not planting potatoes or making oes around here? You've actually remained in your own profes on."

"Oh Calvin Atwood of the Atwood Light and Power Company of lew York City is making the shoes Besides my profession is one of ie oldest and most immediately needed anywhere Still I had to ght for it. I had to ruin a competitor, first

"What?"

He grinned and pointed to the glass door of a sun flooded room There s my ruined competitor," he said

She saw a young man bent over a long table, working on a com lex model for the mold of a drill head He had the slender power ul hands of a concert pianist and the grim face of a surgeon oncentrating on his task

"He s a sculptor," said Stockton "When I came here he and his artner had a sort of combination hand forge and repair shop I pened a real foundry, and took all their customers away from hem. The boy couldn t do the kind of job I did it was only a part ime business for him, anyway—sculpture is his real business—so he ame to work for me He's making more money now, in shorter ours, than he used to make in his own foundry His partner was a hemist, so he went into agriculture and he s produced a chemical ertilizer that s doubled some of the crops around here—did you nention potatoes?—potatoes [illegible]"

"Th- [illegible]

"Su [illegible]

shen [illegible]

He d [illegible]

roduction.

"Who s that?"

"Hank Rearden."

"Yes [illegible]" she whispered "Oh yes!"

She wondered what had made her say it with such immediate certainty She felt, simultaneously, that Hank Rearden's presence in this valley was impossible—and that this was his place, peculiarly his, this was the place of his youth, of his start and together place he had been seeking all his life, the land he had reach the goal of his tortured battle [illegible]. It seemed to her spirals of flame-tinged fog were drawing time into an odd

and while a dim thought went floating through her mind like the streamer of an unfollowed sentence To hold an unchanging youth is to reach at the end ...

the broad back of a foreman whose arm made the sweeping gesture of a signal directing some invisible task. He jerked his head to snap an order—she caught a glimpse of his profile—and she caught her ...

was now dressed in smudged overalls

Hello Miss Taggart I told you we'd soon meet again."

Her head dropped as if in assent and in greeting but her hand bore down heavily upon her cane, for a moment, while she stood reliving their last encounter the tortured hour of waiting, then the gently distant face at the desk and the tinkling of a glass-paneled door closing upon a stranger

It was so brief a moment that two of the men before her could take it only as a greeting—but it was at Galt that she looked when she raised her head and she saw him looking at her as if he knew ...

with which a man stands before the fact that the truth is the truth.

"I didn t expect it she said softly, to Danagger "I never expected to see you again."

Danagger was watching her as if she were a promising child he had once discovered and was now affectionately amused to watch. "I know " he said But why are you so shocked?

"I oh its just that its preposterous!" She pointed at his clothes

"What s wrong with it?"

"Is this then the end of your road?"

'Hell no! The beginning "

"What are you aiming at?"

"Mining Not coal though Iron."

"Where?"

... know

He shrugged "There s other things to do I've always been also on time in my life, never on what to use it for "

She glanced at Stockton with curiosity "Aren t you training a man who could become your most dangerous competitor?"

"That s the only sort of men I like to hire Dagny, have you lived

too long among the looters? Have you come to think that one man's ability is a threat to another?"

"Oh no! But I thought I was almost the only one left who didn't think that."

"Any man who's afraid of hiring the best ability he can find, is a cheat who's in a business where he doesn't belong. To me—the foul-

[illegible]

That's what one must never give up," said Ken Danagger.

They had returned to the car and had started down the last, descending curves of the road, when she glanced at Galt and he turned to her at once, as if he had expected it.

"It was you in Danagger's office that day, wasn't it?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Did you know, then, that I was waiting outside?"

"Yes."

"Did you know what it was like, to wait behind that closed door?"

She could not name the nature of the glance with which he looked at her. It was [illegible]

[illegible]

hunk of butter for an attractive young woman who stood at the counter, her posture light as a show girl's, the skirt of her cotton dress swelling faintly in the wind like a dance costume. Dagny smiled involuntarily, even though the man was Lawrence Hammond.

The shops were small one-story structures, and as they mo[ved] past her, she caught familiar names on their signs, like [illegible] the pages of a book riffled by the car's motion: Mulligan [illegible] Store—Atwood Leather Goods—Nielsen Lumber—then the [illegible] the dollar above the door of a small brick factory with

tion Mulligan Tobacco Company. "Who's the Company, besides Midas Mulligan?" she asked "Dr. Akston," he answered

There were few passers-by, some men, fewer women, and they walked with purposeful swiftness, as if bound on specific errands. One after another, they stopped at the sight of the car, they waved to Galt and they looked at her with the unastonished curiosity of recognition "Have I been expected here for a long time?" she asked. "You still are," he answered.

On the edge of the road, she saw a structure made of glass sheets held together by a wooden framework, but for one instant it seemed to her that it was only a frame for the painting of a woman—a tall, fragile woman with pale blond hair and a face of such beauty that it seemed veiled by distance, as if the artist had been merely able to suggest it, not to make it quite real In the next instant the woman moved her head—and Dagny realized that there were people at the tables inside the structure, that it was a cafeteria, that the woman stood behind the counter, and that she was Kay Ludlow, the movie star who, once seen, could never be forgotten; the star who had [illegible]

being made—and then she felt that the glass cafeteria was a greater use for Kay Ludlow's beauty than a role in a picture glorifying the commonplace for possessing no glory

The building that came next was a small, squat block of rough granite, sturdy, solid, neatly built, the lines of its rectangular bulk as severely precise as the creases of a formal garment—but she saw, like an instant's ghost, the long streak of a skyscraper rising into the coils of Chicago's fog, the skyscraper that had once borne the sign she now saw written in gold letters above a modest pine wood door Mulligan Bank.

Galt slowed the car [illegible] as if placing the [illegible]

Mulligan"

"But . . . on whose authority?"

"That's stated on the coin—on both sides of it."

"What do you use for small change?"

"Mulligan mints that, too, in silver We don't accept any other currency in this valley We accept nothing but *objective* values."

She was studying the coins "This looks like . . . like something from the first morning in the age of my ancestors"

He pointed at the valley. "Yes, doesn't it?"

hand.

"You're not making it easier for me," she said, her voice low.

"I'm making it as hard as possible."

"Why don't you say it? Why don't you tell me all the things you want me to learn?"

The gesture of h... the road beh nd

mostly of granite and pine, with a prodigal ingenuity of thought and a tight economy of physical effort. Every house looked as if it had been put up by the labor of one man, no two houses were alike, and the only quality they had in common was the stamp of a mind grasping a problem ... house, once in

Lawrence Hammond ... Roger Marsh ... Ellis Wyatt ... Owen Kellogg ... Dr. Akston."

two walls of ancient pines, their tall, straight trunks pressing against it like a ... above, swallowing

like the shock of an unexpected sound: built in loneliness, cut off from all ties to human existence, it looked like the secret retreat of some great defiance or sorrow. It was the humblest home of the valley, a log cabin beaten in dark streaks by the tears of many ra... only its great windows withstanding the storms with the shining, untouched serenity of glass.

"Whose house is ... Oh!"—she caught her breath and jer

As if in deliberate answer to her involuntary movement [illegible]
Galt stopped the car in front of the house For a moment, they [illegible]

[illegible]

cane, she stepped out of the car, then stood erect, facing [illegible]

She looked at the silver crest that had come from a marble pala[illegible] in Spain to a shack in the Andes to a log cabin in Colorado—t[illegible] crest of the men who would not submit The door of the cabin w[illegible] locked the sun did not reach into the glazed darkness beyond the windows, and pine branches hung outstretched above the roof like arms spread in protection, in compassion, in solemn blessing With no sound but the snap of a twig or the ring of a drop falling somewhere in the forest through long stretches of moments, the silence seemed to hold all the pain that had been hidden here, but never given voice She stood, listening with a gentle, resigned, unlamenting respect Let's see who'll do greater honor, you—to Nat Taggart, or I—to Sebastian d'Anconia Dagny! Help me to remain To refuse Even though he's right!

She turned to look at Galt, knowing that *he* was the man against whom she had had no help to offer He sat at the wheel of the car, he had not followed her or moved to assist her, as if he had wanted her to acknowledge the past and had respected the privacy of her lonely salute She noticed that he still sat as she had left him, his forearm leaning against the wheel at the same angle, the fingers of his hand hanging down in the same sculptured position His eyes were watching her, but that was all she could read in his face that he had watched her intently, without moving

When she was seated beside him once more, he said, "That was the first man I took away from you"

[illegible] "How much [illegible]

[illegible] t the tone of [illegible]

She inclined her head She had caught the sound of suffering in the faintest exaggeration of evenness in his voice

He pressed the starter, the motor's explosion blasted the story contained in the silence, and they drove on

The path widened a little, streaming toward a pool of sunlight ahead She saw a brief glitter of wires among the branches, as they drove out into a clearing An unobtrusive little structure stood against a hillside, on a rising slant of rocky ground It was a simple cube of granite, the size of a toolshed, it had no windows, no apertures of any kind, only a door of polished steel and a complex set of wire antennae branching out from the roof Galt was driving past, leaving it unnoticed, when she asked with a sudden start, "What's that?"

She saw the faint break of his smile "The powerhouse."

"Oh, stop, please!"

[illegible] the foot of the hillside. It was her [illegible]

She stood looking up at the structure, her consciousness sur- [illegible] —but she [illegible]

[illegible] thought of a superlative achievement of the human mind [illegible] [illegible] as a [illegible]

[illegible] competence—then here it was before her, reached and [illegible] power of an incomparable mind given shape in a net of wires sparkling peacefully under a summer sky, drawing an incalculable power out of space into the secret interior of a small stone hovel

She thought of this structure, half the size of a boxcar, replacing the power plants of the country, the enormous conglomerations of steel, fuel and [illegible] the current flowing from this [illegible] shoulders [illegible] and years [illegible] lift one's head from one's task and glance at the sunlight, or an extra pack of cigarettes bought with the money saved from one's electric bill, or an hour cut from the work-day of every factory using power, or a month's journey through the whole, open width of the world, on a ticket paid for by one day of one's labor, on a train pulled by the power of [illegible] of that weight, that strain, [illegible] who [illegible] ions [illegible] otors [illegible] nent [illegible] of factories [illegible] meaning was in man's [illegible] [illegible] lmiration at [illegible] om it came, [illegible] had seen the [illegible] he work [illegible] achieving one's happiness was the purpose, the sanction and meaning of life.

The door of [illegible] was a straight, smooth sheet of

steel, softly lustrous and bluish in the sun Above it, cut in the granite as the only feature of the building's rectangular austerity, there stood an inscription

I SWEAR BY MY LIFE AND MY LOVE OF IT THAT I WILL NEVER LIVE FOR THE SAKE OF ANOTHER MAN, NOR ASK ANOTHER MAN TO LIVE FOR MINE.

She turned to Galt He stood beside her, he had followed her he had known that this salute was his She was looking at the inventor of the motor, but what she saw was the easy, casual figure of a workman in his natural setting and function—she noted the uncommon lightness of his posture, a weightless way of standing that showed an expert control of the use of his body—a tall body in simple garments a thin shirt, light slacks, a belt about a slender waistline—and loose hair made to glitter like metal by the current of a sluggish wind She looked at him as she had looked at his structure

Then she knew that the first two sentences they had said to each other still hung between them, filling the silence—that everything said since, had been said over the sound of those words, that he had known it, had held it, had not let her forget it She was suddenly aware that they were alone, it was an awareness that stressed the fact, permitting no further implication, yet holding the full meaning of the unnamed in that special stress. They were alone in a silent forest at the foot of a structure that looked like an ancient temple—and she knew what rite was the proper form of worship to be offered on an altar of that kind. She felt a sudden pressure at the base of her throat, her head leaned back a little, no more than to feel the faint shift of a current against her hair, but it was as if she were lying back in space, against the wind, conscious of nothing but his legs and the shape of his mouth He stood watching her, his face still but for the faint movement [illegible] narrow as if ag[illegible] wa[illegible] at [illegible] enc[illegible] to [illegible]

She let him look at it for a moment, almost as an act of condescending mercy to an adversary struggling to refuel his strength, then she asked, with a note of imperious pride in her voice, pointing at the inscription, "What's that?"

"It's the oath that was taken by every person in this valley, but you"

She said, looking at the words, "This has always been my own rule of living"

"I know it"

"But I don t think that yours is the way to practice it"

"Then you'll have to learn which one of us is wrong"

She walked up to the steel door of the structure with a sudden confidence faintly stressed in the movements of her body, a mere hint of stress, no more than her awareness of the power she held by of his pain—and she tried, asking no permission, to turn the

knob of the door But the door was locked, and she felt no tremor under the pressure of her hand, as if the lock were poured and sealed to the stone with the solid steel of the sheet

"Don't try to open that door, Miss Taggart'

He approached her, his steps a shade too slow, as if stressing his knowledge of her awareness of every step "No amount of physical force will do it," he said "Only a thought can open that door If you tried to break it down by means of the best explosives in the world the machinery inside would collapse into rubble long before the door would give way But reach the thought which it requires—and the secret of the motor will be yours, as well as —it was the first break she had heard in his voice—"as well as any other secret you might wish to know"

He faced her for a moment, as if leaving himself open to her full understanding, then smiled oddly, quietly at some thought of his own, and added, "I'll show you how it s done"

He [illegible]

[illegible] for the first time and with full knowledge of the years ahead—she knew what manner of man had stood up to face six thousand others on a dark spring night and why they had been afraid of him she knew that this was the birth and the core of all the things that had happened to the world in the twelve years since she knew that this was of far greater import than the motor hidden inside the structure —she knew it, to the sound of a man s voice pronouncing in self reminder and rededication

"I swear by my life [illegible], and my love of it [illegible] that I will never live for the sake of another man [illegible] nor ask another man [illegible] to live [illegible], for mine"

It d d [illegible] ost unim port [illegible] opening slow [illegible] ving strip of [illegible] on inside the [illegible] its lock clicking sealed once more

"It s a sound lock," he said, his face was serene "That sentence is the combination of sounds needed to open it. I don t mind telling you this secret—because I know that you won t pronounce those words until you mean them the way I intended them to be meant."

She inclined her head 'I won't."

She followed him down to the car slowly feeling suddenly too exhausted to move. She fell back against the seat closing her eyes, barely hearing the sound of the starter The accumulated strain and shock of her sleepless hours hit her at once, breaking through barrier of the tension her nerves had held to delay it. She lay

unable to think, to react or to struggle, drained of all emotions but one

She did not speak She did not open her eyes until the car stopped in front of his house

"You'd better rest," he said, "and go to sleep right now, if you want to attend Mulligan's dinner tonight"

She nodded obediently She staggered to the house, avoiding his help She made an effort to tell him, "I'll be all right," then to escape to the safety of her room and last long enough to close the door.

She collapsed, face down, on the bed It was not the mere fact of physical exhaustion It was the sudden monomania of a sensation [illegible]

her unable to desire, only to feel, reducing her to a mere sensation—a static sensation without start or goal She kept seeing his figure in her mind—his figure as he had stood at the door of the structure—she felt nothing else, no wish, no hope, no estimate of her feeling, no name for it, no relation to herself—there was no entity such as her self, she was not a person, only a function, the function of seeing him, and the sight was its own meaning and purpose, with no further end to reach

[illegible] sensa-[illegible]

goal—and in the moment when the wheels left the ground, she was asleep.

* *

The floor of the valley was like a pool still reflecting the glow of the sky, but the light was thickening from gold to copper, the shores were fading and the peaks were smoke blue—when they drove to Mulligan's house

There was no trace of exhaustion left in her bearing and no remnant of violence She had awakened at sundown, stepping out of her room, she had found Galt waiting, sitting idly motionless in the light of a lamp He had glanced up at her, she had stood in the doorway, her face composed, her hair smooth, her posture relaxed and confident—she had looked as she would have looked on the threshold of her office in the Taggart Building, but for the slight angle of her body leaning on a cane He had sat looking at her for a moment, and she had wondered why she had felt certain that this was the image he was seeing—he was seeing the doorway of her office, as if it were [illegible]

Her eyes moved slowly, in greeting from face to face Ellis Wyatt —Ken Danagger—Hugh Akston—Dr Hendricks—Quentin Daniels —Mulligan s voice pronounced the names of the two others "Richard Halley—Judge Narragansett."

The faint smile on Richard Halley's face seemed to tell her that they had kno ... her lonely evenings by

...

... Mulligan "This was not the way we expected you to come ... but—welcome home."

No!—she wanted to answer, but heard herself answering softly, "Thank you"

"Dagny, how many years is it going to take you to learn to be yourself?" It was Ell ... W ... her to a chair ... ... en a smile and ... that you don't ... You do

"We never make assertions Miss Taggart," said Hugh Akston. "That is the moral crime peculiar to our enemies We do not tell—we show We do not claim—we *prove* It is not your obedience that we seek to win, but your rational conviction You have seen all the elements of our secret The conclusion is now yours to draw—we can help you to name it but not to accept it—the sight, the knowledge and the acceptance must be yours"

"I feel as if I know it" she answered simply "and more I ... as if I've always known it, but never found it, and now I'm

not afraid to hear it just afraid that it's coming so close"

Akston smiled, "What does this look like to you, Miss Taggart?" He pointed around the room

"This?" She laughed suddenly, looking at the faces of the men against the golden sunburst of rays filling the great windows "This looks like You know, I never hoped to see any of you again, I wondered at times how much I d give for just one more glimpse or one more word—and now—now this is like that dream you imagine in childhood when you think that some day, in heaven, you will see those great departed whom you had not seen on earth and you choose, from all the past centuries, the great men you would like to meet"

"Well, that s one clue to the nature of our secret," said Akston. "Ask yourself whether the dream of heaven and greatness should be left waiting for us in our graves—or whether it should be ours here and now and on this earth '

"I know she whispered

And if you met those great men in heaven," asked Ken Danagger, "what would you want to say to them?'

'Just just hello I guess"

"That s not all said Danagger "There s something you d want to [illegible] for the first [illegible] w [illegible] ant [illegible] ad [illegible] art [illegible] ne —too well—and now it s time for you to rest from that burden which none of us should ever have had to carry"

"Shut up" said Midas Mulligan, looking at her bowed head with anxious concern.

But she raised her head, smiling "Thank you," she said to Danagger

[illegible] said Mulligan. "She [illegible] ever it is"

[illegible] dinner, with Quentin Daniels to help them They served it on small silver trays to be placed on the arms of the chairs—and they all sat about the room with the fire of the sky fading in the windows and sparks of electric light glittering in the wine glasses There was an air of luxury about the room, but it was the luxury of expert simplicity, she noted the costly furniture carefully chosen for comfort, bought somewhere at a time when luxury had still been an art. There were no superfluous objects, but she noticed a small canvas by a great master of the Renaissance worth a fortune, she noticed an Oriental rug of a texture and color that belonged under glass in a museum This was Mulligan s concept of wealth, she thought—the wealth of selection not of accumulation

Quentin Daniels sat on the floor, with his tray on his lap, he

and he glanced up at her once in a
her to
valley
while

of Dr.
had stepped back and
hing it as a spectacle
her eyes kept coming
spectacle was of his
ice and staging, that he had set it in motion long ago, and that
the others knew it as she knew it.

She noticed another person who was intensely aware of Galt's
once in a while, invol-
confess the
him, as if
nt forward
ached over
ble instant
ion he per-
itted himself, the only greeting; it was the gesture of a father

She was barely aware of her questions, as she spoke
fter another, but their answers were printing a record in her mind,
moving sentence by sentence to a goal.

"The Fifth Concerto?" said Richard Halley, in answer to her
uestion. "I wrote it ten years ago We call it the Concerto of
Deliverance. Thank you for recognizing it from a few notes whistled
n the night. . . . Yes, I know about that. Yes, since you knew
ny work, you would know, when you heard it, that this Concerto
aid everything I had been struggling to say and reach It's dedicated
o him." He pointed to Galt "Why, no, Miss Taggart, I haven't
given up music. What makes you think so? I've written more in the

"No, Miss Taggart, I have not . . . I have spent the last six years
Hendricks, in answer to her question "I have spent the last six years
on research I have discovered a method to protect the blood vessels
of the brain from that fatal rupture which is known as a brain
stroke. It will remove from human existence the terrible threat of
sudden paralysis. . . . No, not a word of my method will be heard
outside."

"The law, Miss Taggart?" said Judge Narragansett "What
the

possible for men to abandon their sight of it, and then it is justice that destroys them But it is not possible for justice to go out of existence has

destructive horror machine among all the devices of men is no objective law No, Miss Taggart, my treatise will not be published outside '

'My business Miss Taggart?" said Midas Mulligan 'My business is blood transfusion—and I m still doing it My job is to feed a life fuel into the plants that are capable of growing But ask Dr Hendricks whether any amount of blood will save a body that refuses to function, a rotten hulk that expects to exist without effort My blood bank is gold Gold is a fuel that will perform wonders but no fuel can work where there is no motor No, I haven given up I merely got fed up with the job of running a slaughterhouse, where one drains blood out of healthy living beings an

that state of perfect

They all turned to him as if they had been waiting for his voice and for that word She heard the empty beat of time within her which was the

"Why should this seem so startling? There is only one kind of men who have

cover who they are what they do and what happens when they refuse to function This is the strike of the men of the mind Miss Taggart. This is the mind on strike"

She did not move except for the fingers of one hand that moved slowly up her cheek to her temple.

"Through all the ages," he said, "the mind has been regarded as evil, and every form of insult from heretic to materialist to ex-
ploiter—every form of iniquity from exile to disfranchisement to
propriation—every form of torture from sneers to rack to firing
uad—have been brought down upon those who assumed the re-
onsibility of looking at the world through the eyes of a living
nsciousness and performing the crucial act of a rational connec-
n. Yet only to the extent to which—in chains, in dungeons, in
dden corners, in the cells of philosophers, in the shops of traders
some men continued to think, only to that extent was humanity
le to survive. Through all the centuries of the worship of the
indless, whatever stagnation humanity chose to endure, whatever
utality to practice—it was only by the grace of the men who
rceived that wheat must have water in order to grow, that stones
d in a curve will form an arch, that two and two makes four that
ve is not served by torture and life is not fed by destruction—
ly by the grace of those men did the rest of them learn to experi-
ce moments when they caught the spark of being human, and only
e sum of such moments permitted them to continue to exist It
as the man of the mind who taught them to bake their bread, to
al their wounds, to forge the

oblest and most joyous power—and in service to that love of
istence he

umanity worshipped the idol of instinct and the idol of force—the
ystics and the kings—the mystics who longed for an irresponsible
onsciousness and ruled by means of the claim that their dark emo-
ions were superior to reason, that knowledge came in blind cause-
ess fits blindly to be followed, not doubted—and the kings who
uled by means of claws and muscles, with conquest as their method
nd looting as their aim, with a club or a gun as sole sanction of
heir power The defenders of man's soul were concerned with his
eelings, and the defenders of man's body were concerned with his
tomach—but both were united against his mind Yet no one not
he lowest of humans is ever able fully to renounce his brain. No
one has ever believed in the irrational what they do believe in is the
unjust. Whenever a man denounces the mind it is because his goal
is of a nature ... to confess When he

price of any contradiction It is the victims who made injustice pos
sible It is the men of reason who made it possible for the rule o
[illegible]

[illegible]

who are incapable of working. They will dispose of our energy because they have none to offer, and of our product, because they can't produce Do you say that this is impossible, that it cannot be made to work? They know it, but it is you who don't—and they are counting on you not to know it They are counting on you to go on to work to the limit of the inhuman and to feed them while you last—and when you collapse, there will be another victim starting out and feeding them, while struggling to survive—and the span of each succeeding victim will be shorter, and while you'll die to leave them a railroad, your last descendant-in-spirit will die to leave them a loaf of bread. This does not worry the looters of the moment Their plan—like all the plans of all the royal looters of the past—is only that the loot shall last their lifetime It has always lasted before because in one generation they could not run out of victims But this time—*it will not last* The victims are on strike We are on strike against martyrdom—and against the moral code that demands it We are on strike against those who believe that one man must exist for the sake of another We are on strike against the morality of cannibals, be it practiced in body or in spirit. We will not deal with men on any terms but ours—and our terms are a moral code which holds that man is an end in himself and not the means to any end of others We do not seek to force our code upon them They are free to believe what they please. But, for once, they will have to believe it and to exist—without our help And, once and for all, they will learn the meaning of their creed That creed has lasted for centuries solely by the sanction of the victims—by means of the victims' acceptance of punishment for breaking a code impossible to practice But that code was intended to be broken. It is a code [that th]rives not on those who observe it, but on those who don't

ity kept in existence not by virtue of its saints, but by the grace of its sinners. We ha... We have

He got up, he stood, hands in pockets, his face in the light—and she saw him smile with the easy, effortless, implacable amusement of certainty.

"We've heard so much about strikes," he said, "and about the dependence of th... We've heard it

...the world who depends on whom, who supports whom, who is the source of wealth, who makes whose livelihood possible and what happens to whom when who walks out."

The windows were now sheets of darkness, reflecting the dots of lighted cigarettes. He picked a cigarette from a table beside him, and in the flare of a match she saw the brief sparkle of gold, the dollar sign, between ...

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achieve the destruction of the mind They grant the enemy s basic premise thus granting the sanction of reason to formal dementia. A basic premise is an absolute that permits no co-operation with its antithesis and tolerates no tolerance In the same manner and for the same reason as a banker may not accept and pass counterfeit money granting it the sanction honor and prestige of his bank, just as he
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ophy except his declared intention to destroy it He seeks to cast in—by means of denying it—on the power of reason among men He seeks to stamp the mint mark of reason upon the plans of his looting masters He seeks to use the prestige of philosophy to purchase the enslavement of thought. But that prestige is an account which can exist only so long as I am there to sign the checks. Let him do it without me Let him—and those who entrust to him their children s minds—have exactly that which they demand a world of intellect als . . .

I honor as first right to my depositors' funds the demand of the who would offer proof that . . . I was

in my life I had watched them grow I had made my fortune by being able to spot a certain kind of man The kind who never asked you for faith hope and charity, but offered you facts, proof and profit Did yo know . . .

picture, and I saw it so clearly that it changed the looks of everything for me I saw the bright face and the eyes of young Rearden, as he d been when I d met him first. I saw him lying at the foot of an altar, with his blood running down into the earth—and what stood on that altar was Lee Hunsacker, with the mucus filled eyes, wh . . .

She looked at Judge Narragansett "You quit over the same case, didn t you?"

"Yes" said Judge Narragansett "I quit when the court of appeals reversed my ruling The purpose for which I had chosen my work, was my resolve to be a guardian of justice But the laws they asked me to enforce made me the executor of the vilest injustice conceivable I was asked to use force to violate the rights of disarmed men, who came before me to seek my protection for their rights Litigants obey the verdict of a tribunal solely on the premise that there is an *objective* rule of conduct, which they both accept Now I saw that one man was to be bound by it, but the other was not, one was to obey a rule, the other was to assert an arbitrary wish—his *need*—and the law was to stand on the side of the wish. Justice was to consist of upholding the unjustifiable I quit—because I could not have borne to hear the words 'Your Honor addressed to me by an honest man"

Her eyes moved slowly to Richard Halley, as if she were both pleading and afraid to hear his story He smiled

"I would have [illegible]" said Richard Halley [illegible]

[illegible] through all those years—except on some nights, when I could neither wait nor believe any longer, when I cried 'why? but found no answer Then, on the night when they chose to cheer me, I stood before them on the stage of a theater, thinking that this was the moment I had struggled to reach, wishing to feel it, but feeling nothing I was seeing all the other nights behind me hearing the 'why?' which [illegible] and their cheers seemed as empty [illegible] you for [illegible] ld have [illegible] es, and [illegible] was the thing I had heard being preached to artists—only I had never believed that anyone human could mean it. They seemed to say that they owed me nothing, that their deafness had provided me with a moral goal, that it had been my duty to struggle to suffer to bear—for their sake—whatever sneers, contempt, injustice, torture *they* chose to inflict upon me, to bear it in order to teach them to enjoy my work, that this was their rightful due and my proper purpose. And then I [illegible] the looter in-spirit, a thing I [illegible] soul, [illegible] the [illegible] —I

ing from me the admission that *they* were the goal of my music, so that precisely by reason of my achievement, it would not be they who d acknowledge my value, but I who would bow to theirs

It was that night that I took the oath never to let them hear another note of mine The streets were empty when I left that theater I was the last one to leave—and I saw a man whom I had never seen before wa t ng for me

with a faint stress of firmness in her voice, as if she were taking a beating but wished to take it to the end

"I quit when medicine was placed under State control, some years ago said Dr Hendricks "Do you know what it takes to perform a brain operation? Do you know the kind of skill it demands and the years of passionate, merciless, excruciating devotion that go to acquire that skill? *That* was what I would not place at the disposal of

the conditions of my work, or my choice of patients, or the amount of my reward I observed that in all the discussions that preceded the enslavement of medicine, men discussed everything—except the desires of the doctors Men considered only the 'welfare' of the patients with no thought for those who were to provide it That a doctor should have any right, desire or choice in the matter was regarded as irrelevant selfishness, his is not to choose, they said only 'to serve ' That a man who s willing to work under compulsion is too dangerous a brute to entrust with a job in the stockyards—never occurred to those who proposed to help the sick by making life impossible for the healthy I have often wondered at the smugness with which people assert their right to enslave me, to control my work, to force my will, to violate my conscience, to stifle my mind—yet what is it that they expect to depend on, when they lie on an operating table under my hands? Their moral code has taught them to believe that it is safe to rely on the virtue of their victims Well that is the virtue I have withdrawn. Let them discover the kind of doctors that their system will now produce Let them discover, in their operating rooms and hospital wards, that it is not safe to place their l ves in the h

cannibals meal and to do the cooking, besides "

"I discovered," said Ken Danagger, "that the men I was fighting were impotent. The shiftless, the purposeless, the irresponsible, the irrational—it was not I who needed them, it was not theirs to dictate terms to me it was not mine to obey demands I quit, to let discover it, too "

"*I quit*," said Quentin Daniels, "because, if there are degrees of damnation, the scientist who places his mind in the service of brute force is the longest range murderer on earth"

They were silent. Sh ... "You

... ulty of ... pted no incurred guilt, and thus was free to earn and to know my own value. Ever since I can remember, I had felt that I would kill the man who'd *claim* that I exist for the sake of his need—and I had known that *this* was the highest moral feeling. That night, at the Twentieth Century meeting, when I heard an unspeakable evil being spoken in a tone of moral righteousness, I saw the root of the world's tragedy, the key to it and the solution. I saw what had to be done ...

... one *would* ever hear of it again. It was my first experimental model. Nobody but me or my equivalent could have been able to complete *it* or even to grasp what it was. And I knew that no equivalent of mine would come near that factory from then on."

"You knew the kind of achievement your motor represented?"

"Yes"

"And you knew you were leaving it to perish?"

"Yes" He looked off into the darkness beyond the windows and chuckled softly, but it was not a sound of amusement. "I looked at my motor for the last time, before I left. I thought of the men who claim that wealth is a matter of natural resources—and of the men who claim that wealth is a matter of seizing the factories—and of the men ... ll, *there* ... as just ... aps and ... service which that motor could have rendered to mankind, if it had been put into production. I think that on the day when men understand the meaning of its fate in that factory's junk heap—it will have rendered a greater one"

"Did you expect to see that day, when you left it?"

"No"

"Did you expect a chance to rebuild it elsewhere?"

"No"

"And you were willing to let it remain in a junk heap?"

"For the sake of what that motor meant to me," he said slowly, "I had to be willing to let it crumble and vanish forever"—he looked straight at her and she heard the steady, unhesitant, ruthlessness of his voice—"just as you will have to be willing ... the rail of Taggart Transcontinental crumble and vanish."

She held his eyes, her head was lifted, and she said softly, in the tone of a proudly open plea "Don t make me answer you now"

I won t We ll tell you whatever you wish to know We won't urge you to make a decision.' He added, and she was shocked by the sudden gentleness of his voice, "I said that that kind of indifference toward a world which should have been ours was the hardest thing to attain I know We ve all gone through it"

She looked at the quiet, impregnable room and at the light—the light that came from his motor—on the faces of men who were the most serene and confident gathering she had ever attended

"What did you do when you walked out of the Twentieth Century? she asked

I went out to become a flame-spotter I made it my job to watch for those bright flares in the growing night of savagery, which were the men of ability the men of the mind—to watch their course, their struggle and their agony—and to pull them out, when I knew that they had seen enough

"What did you tell them to make them abandon everything?"

I told them that they were right '

In answer to the silent question of her glance, he added "I gave them the pride they did not know they had I gave them the words to identify it I gave them that priceless possession which they had missed, had longed for yet had not known they needed a moral sanction Did you call me the destroyer and the hunter of men? I was the walking delegate of this strike, the leader of the victims' rebellion, the defender of the oppressed the disinherited, the exploited—and when *I* use these words, they have, for once, a literal meaning"

"Who were the first to follow you?"

He let a moment pass in deliberate emphasis then answered, "My two best friends You know one of them You know, perhaps better than anyone else what price he paid for it. Our own teacher, Dr Akston was next He joined us within one evening s conversation. William Hastings who had been my boss in the research laboratory of Twentieth Century Motors had a hard time, fighting it out with himself It took him a year But he joined Then Richard Halley Then Midas Mulligan"

"—who took fifteen minutes," said Mulligan

[illegible] first. [illegible] by [illegible] they [illegible] when [illegible] ver [illegible] ve [illegible] a

looter When I heard that John had got Judge Narragansett, too, I invited the Judge to come here Then we asked Richard Halley to join us The others remained outside at first."

"We had no rules of any kind" said Galt, "except one When a

man took our oath, it meant a single commitment not to work in his own profession, not to give to the world the benefit of his mind Each of us *carried* it out in any manner he chose Those who had money, retired to live on their savings Those who had to work, took the lowest jobs they could find Some of us had been famous, others—like that young brakeman of yours, whom Halley discov ered—were stopped by us before they had set out to get tortured But we did not give up our minds or the work we loved Each of us continued *in his* real profession, in whatever manner and spare time he could manage—but he did it secretly, for his own sole benefit, giving nothing to men, sharing nothing We were scattered all over the country, as the outcasts we had always been, only now we accepted our parts with conscious intention Our sole relief were the rare occasions when we could see one another We found that we liked to *meet*—in order to be reminded that human beings still existed So we came to set aside one month a year to spend in this valley—*to rest*, to live in a rational world, to bring our real work out of hiding, to trad

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"You see, Miss Taggart," said Hugh Akston, "man *is* a social being, but not in the way the looters preach"

"*It's the* destruction of Colorado that started the growth of this valley," said Midas Mulligan. "Ellis Wyatt and the others came to ive here permanently, because they had to hide Whatever part of heir wealth they could salvage, they converted into gold or nachines, as I had, and they brought it here There were enough of s to develop the place and to create jobs for those who had had o earn their living outside We have now reached the stage where nost of us can live here full time The valley is almost self-sup orting—and as to the goods that we can't yet produce, I purchase iem from the outside through a pipe line of my own It's a special gent, a man who does not let my money reach the looters We are ot a *state* here, not a society of any kind—we're just a voluntary sociation of men held together by nothing but every man's self terest. I own the valley and I sell the land to the others, when ey want it Judge Narragansett is to act as our arbiter, in case of sagreements He hasn't had to be called upon, as yet. They say at it's hard for men to agree You'd be surprised how easy it is—ien both parties hold as their moral absolute that neither exists r the sake of the other and th

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stou Men are stopping and giving up Your frozen trains, the ngs of raiders, the deserters, they're men who've never and they're not part of our strike, they are acting on their the natural response of whatever rationality is still left in the same kind of protest as ours"

We started with no time limit in view," said Galt "We did know whether we'd live to see the liberation of the world or whet we d have to leave our battle and our secret to the next generatic We knew only that this was the only way we cared to live But n we think that we will see, and soon, the day of our victory of our return"

'When? she whispered

When the code of the looters has collapsed"

He saw her looking at him, her glance half-question, half ho and he added, 'When the creed of self immolation has run, once, its undisguised course—when men find no victims ready obstruct the path of justice and to deflect the fall of retribution themselves—when the preachers of self sacrifice discover that the who are willing to practice it, have nothing to sacrifice, and the who have are not willing any longer—when men see that neit their hearts nor their muscles can save them but the mind th

[illegible]

[illegible] Taggart Terminal, she thought, she heard the words beatı through the [illegible]

[illegible] straight lines of rail met and vanished, drawing her forward— they had drawn Nathaniel Taggart—this was the goal Nathan Taggart [illegible]
the strai [illegible]
men in [illegible]
had dedicated herself to the rail of Taggart Transcontinental, as t the body of a spirit yet to be found She had found it, everythin she had ever wanted, it was here in the room [illegible] and hers but the price was t [illegible]
vanish, the bridges [illegible]
go out [illegible] And [illegible]
thought—looking a [illegible]
hair and implacable eyes

"You don't have to answer us now."

She raised her head, he was watching her as if he had followed the steps in her mind

"We never demand agreement," he said "We never tell anyone more than he is ready to hear You are the first person who has learned our secret ahead of time But you're here and you had to know Now you know the exact nature of the choice you'll have to make If it seems hard, it's because you still think that it does not have to be one or the other You will learn that it does"

'Will you give me time?"

"Your time is not ours to give Take your time You alone can decide what you ll choose to do, and when. We know the

of that decision We've paid it. That you've come here might now make it easier for you—or harder."

"Harder," she whispered,

"I know"

He said it, his voice as low as hers, with the same sound of being forced past one's breath, and she missed an instant of time, as in the ...

A full moon stood in the sky above the valley, when they drove back to his house, ...

... distance, its shapes did not ...

... she was l... ighted windows w... walls were dissolv... n torpid, unhurried waves It looked like a city sinking under water

"What do they call this place?" she asked

"I call it Mulligan's Valley," he said "The others call it Galt's Gulch."

"I'd call it—" but she did not finish

He glanced at her She knew what he saw in her face He turned away

She saw ... the release of a breath ... er glance, her arm ... and were suddenly ... elbow ... and pine branches ... over their heads Above a slant of rock moving to meet them she saw the moonlight on the windows of his house Her head fell back against the seat and she lay still, losing awareness of the car, feeling only the motion that carried her forward, watching the glittering drops of water in the pine branches, which were the stars

When the car stopped, she did not permit herself to know why she did not look at him as she stepped out She did not know that he stood still for an instant, looking up at the dark windows She did not hear him approach, but she felt the impact of his hands with shocking intensity, as if it were the only awareness she could now experience He lifted her in his arms and started slowly up the path to the house.

He walked, not looking at her, holding her tight, as if trying to hold a progression of time, as if his arms were still locked over the moment when he had lifted her against his chest She ... steps as if they were a single span of motion to a goal and each step were a separate moment in which she dared not

of the next Her head was close to his, his hair brushing her cheek and she knew that neither of them would move his face that one breath closer .
complete in its
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with his eyes (

He entered the house and as he moved across the living room he did not look to his left and neither did she, but she knew that both of them were seeing the door on his left that led to his bedroom He walked the length of the darkness to the wedge of moonlight that fell across the guest room bed, he placed her down upon it she felt an instant's pause of his hands still holding her shoulder and waistline, and when his hands left her body, she knew that the moment was over

He stepped back and pressed a switch, surrendering the room to the harshly public glare of light He stood still, as if demanding that she look at him his face expectant and stern

"Have you forgotten that you wanted to shoot me on sight?" he asked

It was the unprotected stillness of his figure that made it real The shudder that threw her upright was like a cry of terror and denial, but she held his glance and answered evenly, "That's true I did"

"Then stand by it"

Her voice was low its intensity was both a surrender and a scornful reproach "You know better than that, don't you?"

He shook his head "No I want you to remember that that has been your wish. You were right, in the past So long as you were part of the outer world you had to seek to destroy me And of the two courses now open to you one will lead you to the day when you will find yourself forced to do it' She did not answer, she sat looking down he saw the strands of her hair swing jerkily as she shook her head in desperate protest. "You are my only danger You are the only person who could deliver me to my enemies If you remain with them you will Choose that, if you wish but choose it with full knowledge Don't answer me now But until you do"—the stress of severity in his voice was the sound of effort directed against himself— remember that I know the meaning of either answer"

"As fully as I do?" she whispered

"As fully"

He turned to go when her eyes fell suddenly upon the inscriptions she had noticed and forgotten, on the walls of the room

They were cut into the polish of the wood, still showing the force of the pencil's pressure in the hands that had made them, each in his own violent writing "You'll get over it—Ellis Wyatt" "It will be all right by morning—Ken Danagger" "It's worth it—Roger Marsh" There were others

"What is that?" she asked

He smiled "This is the room where they spent their first night in the valley The first night is the hardest It's the last pull of the

:eak with one's memories, and the worst I let them stay here, so hey can call for me, if they want me I speak to them, if they can't sleep Most of them can t But they're free of it by morning . . . They've all gone through this room Now they call it the orture chamber or the anteroom—because everyone has to enter he valley through my house"

threshold and added

you to occupy Good night,

Chapter II THE UTOPIA OF GREED

'Good morning"

She looked at him across the living room from the threshold of her door In the windows behind him, the mountains had that tinge of silver pink which seems brighter than daylight, with the promise of a light to come The sun had risen somewhere over the earth but it had not reached the top of the barrier, and the sky was glowing in its stead, announcing its motion She had heard the joyous greeting to the sunrise, which was not the song of birds, but the ringing of the telephone a moment ago she saw the start of day, not in the shining green of the branches outside but in the glitter of chromium on the stove, the sparkle of a glass ashtray on a table, and the crisp whiteness of his shirt sleeves Irresistibly she heard the sound of a smile in her own voice matching his, as she answered

"Good morning"

He was gathering notes of penciled calculations from his desk and stuffing them into his pocket "I have to go down to the powerhouse," he said "They've just phoned me that they're having trouble with the ray screen. Your plane seems to have knocked it off key I ll be back in half an hour and then I'll cook our breakfast

It was the casual simplicity of his voice the manner of taking her presence and their domestic routine for granted as if it were of no significance to them, that gave her the sense of an underscored significance and the feeling that he knew it

She answered as casually, "If you ll bring me the cane I left in the car I ll have breakfast ready for you by the time you come back"

He glanced at her with a slight astonishment his eyes moved from her bandaged ankle to the short sleeves of the blouse that left her arms bare to display the heavy bandage on her elbow But the transparent blouse, the open collar the hair falling down to the shoulders that seemed innocently naked under a thin film of cloth, made her look like a schoolgirl, not an invalid, and her posture made the bandages look irrelevant

H... ... ...ment at some s

her hesitantly conscious of her hands, as if to touch any object around her would be too great an intimacy. The other part was a reckless sense of ease, a sense of being at home in this place as if she owned its owner.

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performed for their own sake, for the sort of pleasure one expects, but seldom finds, in the motions of dancing It startled her to realize that she had not experienced this kind of pleasure in her work since her days at the operator's desk in Rockdale Station.

She was setting the table, when she saw the figure of a man

"hat leaped

the door

v her He

nd a face

ll, staring

at him, not in admiration, at first, but in simple disbelief

He looked at her as if he had not expected to find a woman in this house Then she saw a look of recognition melting into a different kind of

melting

words

g, you

know that it's not possible," he said. "Not here"

"I crashed the gate Literally"

He looked at her bandages, weighing the question, his glance almost insolent in its open curiosity "When?"

"Yesterday"

"How?"

"In a plane"

"What were you doing in a plane in this part of the country?"

He had the direct, imperious manner of an aristocrat or a roughneck, he looked like one and was dressed like the other She considered him for a moment, deliberately letting him wait. "I was trying to land on a prehistorical mirage," she answered. "And I have"

"You are a tough"

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movements with an open grin, as if the sight of her laying out cutlery on a kitchen table were the spectacle of some special paradox.

"What did Francisco say when he saw you here?" he asked

She turned to him with a slight jolt, but answered evenly, "He is not here yet."

"Not yet?" He seemed startled "Are you

"So I was told"

He lighted a cigarette. She wondered, watching him, what profession he had chosen, loved and abandoned in order to join this valley She [illegible] seemed to fit she caught [illegible] no pro- [illegible] his in- [illegible] did not [illegible] rt—and it seemed to be a stressed indignity of the outer world that a perfection such as his should be subjected to the shocks, the strains, the scars reserved for any man who loved his work. But the feeling seemed the more preposterous, because the lines of his face had the sort of hardness for which no danger on earth was a match.

"No Miss Taggart," he said suddenly, catching her glance, "you've never seen me before."

She was shocked to realize that she had been studying him openly "How do you happen to know who I am? she asked

"First, I've seen your pictures in the papers many times Second, you're the only woman left in the outer world to the best of our knowledge, who'd be allowed to enter Galt's Gulch Third, you're the only woman who'd have the courage—and prodigality—still to remain a scab"

"What made you certain that I was a scab?'

"If you weren't, you'd know that it s not this valley but the view of life held by men in the outer world that is a prehistorical mirage"

They heard the sound of the motor and saw the car stopping below in front of the house She noticed the swiftness with which he rose to his feet at the sight of Galt in the car, if it were not for the obvious personal eagerness, it would have looked like an instinctive gesture of military respect

She noticed the way Galt stopped when he entered and saw his visitor She noticed that Galt smiled but that his voice was oddly low, almost solemn, as if weighted with unconfessed relief, when he said very quietly, "Hello

"Hi, John," said the visitor gaily

She noticed that their handshake came an instant too late and lasted an instant too long, like the handshake of men who had not been certain that their previous meeting would not be their last.

Galt turned to her "Have you met? he asked addressing them both.

"Not exactly," said the visitor

"Miss Taggart, may I present Ragnar Danneskjold?"

She knew what her face had looked like when she heard Danneskjöld's voice as from a great distance "You don t have to be frightened, Miss Taggart. I m not dangerous to anyone in Galt s Gulch."

She could only shake her head before she recaptured her voice to say "It s not what you re doing to anyone it s what they doing to you. . . "

His laughter swept her out of her moment s stupor "Be Miss Taggart. If that s how you re beginning to feel you

remain a scab for long" He added, "But you ought to start by adopting the right things from the people in Galt's Gulch, not their mistakes they've spent twelve years worrying about me—needlessly" He glanced at Galt

When did you get in?' asked Galt.

'Late last night"

'Sit down You're going to have breakfast with us"

"But where's Francisco? Why isn't he here yet?'

"I don't know," said Galt, frowning slightly "I asked at the airport, just now Nobody's heard from him"

As she turned to the kitchen, Galt moved to follow "No," she said, it's my job today"

"Let me help you"

"This is the place where one doesn't ask for help, isn't it?"

He smiled 'That's right"

She had never experienced the pleasure of motion, of walking as if her feet had no weight to carry, as if the support of the cane in her hand were merely a superfluous touch of elegance, the pleasure of feeling her steps trace swift, straight lines, of sensing the faultless, spontaneous precision of her gestures—as she experienced it while placing their food on the table in front of the two men Her bearing told them that she knew they were watching her—she held her head like an actress on a stage like a woman in a ballroom like the winner of a silent contest.

"Francisco will be glad to know that it's you who were his stand in today," said Danneskjold, when she joined them at the table

"His what?"

"You see, today is June first, and the three of us—John Francisco and I—have had breakfast together on every June first for twelve years"

"Here?"

"Not when we started But here, ever since this house was built eight years ago' He shrugged, smiling 'For a man who has more centuries of tradition behind him than I have, it's odd that Francisco should be the first to break our own tradition"

"And Mr Galt?' she asked "How many centuries does he have behind him?"

"John? None at all. None behind him—but all of those ahead."

"Never mind the centuries," said Galt "Tell me what sort of year you've had behind you Lost any men?'

"No"

"Lost any of your time?"

"You mean, was I wounded? No I haven't had a scratch since that one time, ten years ago, when I was still an amateur, which you ought to forget by now I wasn't in any danger whatever, this year—in fact I was much more safe than if I were running a small town drugstore under Directive 10-289"

"Lost any battles?"

"No The losses were all on the other side, this year The looters t most of their ships to me—and most of their men to

You've had a good year, too, haven't you? I know, I've kept track [illegible]

soon, because he's hanging by a thin thread and is just about ready to fall at your feet He's a man who saved my life—so you can see how far he's gone"

Galt leaned back, his eyes narrowing. "So you weren't in any danger whatever, were you?"

Danneskjold laughed. "Oh, I took a slight risk It was worth it. It was the most enjoyable encounter I've ever had. I've been waiting to tell you about it in person. It's a story you'll want to hear Do you know who the man was? Hank Rearden. I—"

"No!"

It was Galt's voice, it was a command, the brief snap of sound had a tinge of violence neither of them had ever heard from him before.

"What?" asked Danneskjold softly, incredulously

"Don't tell me about it now"

"But you've always said that Hank Rearden was the one man you wanted to see here most."

"I still do But you'll tell me later"

She studied Galt's face intently, but she could find no clue, only a closed, impersonal look, either of determination or of control, that tightened the skin of his cheekbones and the line of his mouth. No matter what he knew about her, she thought, the only knowledge that could explain this, was a knowledge he had had no way of acquiring.

"You've met Hank Rearden?" she asked, turning to Danneskjold. "And he saved your life?"

"Yes"

"I want to hear about it."

"I don't," said Galt.

"Why not?"

"You're not one of us, Miss Taggart"

"I see" She smiled, with a faint touch of defiance "Were you thinking that I might prevent you from getting Hank Rearden?"

"No, that was not what I was thinking"

She noticed that Danneskjold was studying Galt's face as if he, too found the incident inexplicable Galt held his glance, deliberately and openly, as if challenging him to find the explanation and promising that he would fail She knew that Danneskjold had failed, when she saw a faint crease of humor softening Galt's eyelids.

"What else," asked Galt, "have you accomplished this year?"

"I've defied the law of gravitation"

"You've always done that. In what particular form now?"

"In the form of a flight from mid Atlantic to Colorado in a [illegible] loaded with gold beyond the safety point of its capacity [illegible] Midas sees the amount I have to deposit. My customers, [illegible]

will become richer by—Say, have you told Miss Taggart that she's one of my customers?"

"No, not yet You may tell her, if you wish."

"I'm—What did you say I am?" she asked.

"Don't be shocked, Miss Taggart," said Danneskjöld. "And don't object I'm used to objections I'm a sort of freak here, anyway None of them approve of my particular method of fighting our battle John doesn't, Dr Akston doesn't They think that my life is too valuable for it But, you see, my father was a bishop—and of all his teachings there was only one sentence that I accepted 'All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.'"

"What do you mean?"

"That violence is not practical. If my fellow men believe that the force of the combined tonnage of their muscles is a practical means to rule me—let them learn the outcome of a contest in which there's nothing but brute force on one side, and force ruled by a

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spirit. He is depriving them of reason, I'm depriving them of wealth He is draining the soul of the world, I'm draining its body His is the lesson they have to learn, only I'm impatient and I'm hastening their scholastic progress But, like John, I'm simply complying with their moral code and refusing to grant them a double standard at my expense. Or at Rearden's expense. Or at yours

"What are you talking about?"

"About a method of taxing the income taxers. All methods of taxation are complex, but this one is very simple, because it's the naked essence of all the others.

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pages of a ledger—a ledger where every entry was made by means of offering

beautiful to risk. . . Then it struck her that his physical perfection was only a simple illustration, a childish lesson given to her in crudely obvious terms on the nature of the outer world and on the fate of any human value in a subhuman age Whatever the justice or the evil of his course, she thought, how could they . . . not she thought, his course *was* just, and this was the horror of it that there was no other course for justice to con not condemn him, that she could neither of reproach

". . . and the names of my customers,

en slowly, one by one I had to be certain of the nature of ' character and career On my list of restitution, your name was of the first."

ie forced herself to keep her face expressionlessly tight, and answered only, "I see"

Your account is one of the last left unpaid It is here, at the lligan Bank, to be claimed by you on the day when you join

: see."

Your account, however, is not as large as some of the others, 1 though huge sums were extorted from you by force in the : twelve years. You will find—as it is marked on the copies of r income-tax returns which Mulligan will hand over to you—that

ıu have refunded every penny of your profit—but under your ther's management, Taggart Transcontinental has taken its re of the looting, it has made profits by force by means of gov ment favors, subsidies, moratoriums, directives You were not ponsible for it, you were, in fact, the greatest victim of that icy—but I refunded only the money which was made by pure ductive ability, not the money any part of which was loot taken force"

'I see."

They had finished their breakfast. Danneskjold lighted a cigarette l watched her for an instant through the first jet of smoke as if knew the violence of the conflict in her mind—then he grinned Galt and rose to his feet.

'I'll run along" he said "My wife is waiting for me"

"*What?*" she gasped.

'My wife," he repeated gaily, as if he had not understood the son of her shock

'Who is your wife?"

'Kay Ludlow"

The implications that struck her were more than she could bear consider "When . . . when were you married?"

"Four years ago"

"How could you show yourself anywhere long enough to go rough a wedding ceremony?"

"We were married here, by Judge Narragansett"

"How can"—she tried to stop, but the words burst involuntarily, helpless indignant protest, whether against him fate or the outer orld, she could not tell—"how can she live through eleven months thinking that you, at any moment, might be . ?" She did not ish

He was smiling but she saw the enormous solemnity of uch he and his wife had needed to earn their right to this smile. "She can live through it, Miss Taggart because we ld the belief that this earth is a realm of misery where

doomed to destruction We do not think that tragedy is our natural fate and we do not live in chronic dread of disaster We do not expect disaster until we have specific reason to expect it—and when we encounter it we are free to fight it It is not happiness, but suffering that we consider unnatural It is not success but calamity that we regard as the abnormal exception in human life"

Galt accompanied him to the door, then came back sat down at the table and in a leisurely manner reached for another cup of coffee

She shot to her feet as if flung by a jet of pressure breaking a safety valve Do you think that I'll ever accept h s money?

He waited until the curving streak of coffee had filled his cup

Yes I think so"

sk his life for it!"

"

it!"

"Yes you have

"Then it will lie in that bank till doomsday!"

"No it won t If you don t claim it some part of it—a very small part—w ll be turned over to me in your name

In *my* name? Why?

"To pay for your room and board '

She stared at him her look of anger switching to bewilderment, then dropped slowly back on her chair

He smiled How long did you think you were going to stay here Miss Taggart? He saw her startled look of helplessness You haven t thought of it? I have You re going to stay here for a month For the one month of our vacation like the rest of us. I am not asking for your consent—you did not ask for ours when you came here You broke our rules so you'll have to take the consequences Nobody leaves the valley during this month I could let you go of course but I won t There s no rule demanding that I hold you but by forcing your way here you ve given me the right to any choice I make—and I m going to hold you simply because I want you here If at the end of a month you decide that you wish to go back you will be free to do so Not until then

She sat stra ght the planes of her face relaxed the shape of he

smile

"I shall charge you for your room and board—it *is* against our rules to provide the unearned sustenance of another human being Some of us have wives and children but there is a mutual trade involved in that and a mutual payment"—he glanced at her—"of a kind I am not entitled to collect So I shall charge you fifty cents a day and you will pay me when you accept the account that lie in your name at the Mull gan Bank If you don t accept the account Mulligan w ll charge your debt against it and he will give me the money when I ask for it"

"I shall comply with your terms," she answered, her voice ɪad the shrewd, confident, deliberating slowness of a trader. "But shall not permit the use of that money for my debts."

"How else do you propose to comply?'

"I propose to earn my room and board"

"By what means?"

"By working"

"In what capacity?"

"In the capacity of your cook and housemaid"

For the first time, she saw him take the shock of the unex-ected, in a manner and with a violence she had not foreseen. It as only an explosion of laughter on his part—but he laughed as he were hit beyond his defenses, much beyond the immediate eaning of her words, she felt that she had struck his past, tearing ose some memory and meaning of his own which she could ot know He laughed as if he were seeing some distant image, if he were laughing in its face, as if this were his victory—and ers.

"If you will hire me," she said, her face severely polite, her tone arshly clear, impersonal and businesslike I shall cook your meals, ean your house, do your laundry and perform such other duties are required of a servant—in exchange for my room, board and ch money as I will need for some items of clothing. I may be ghtly handicapped by my injuries for the next few days, but that ll not last and I will be able to do the job fully"

"Is that what you want to do?" he asked

"That is what I want to do—" she answered, and stopped before e uttered the rest of the answer in her mind more than anything e in the world

He was still smiling, it was a smile of amusement, but it was if amusement could be transmuted into some shining glory "All ht, Miss Taggart," he said, "I'll hire you"

She inclined her head in a dryly formal acknowledgment. "Thank u."

"I will pay you ten dollars a month, in addition to your room d board"

"Very well"

"I shall be the first man in this valley to hire a servant" He got reached into his pocket and threw a five-dollar gold piece down the table. "As advance on your wages," he said

She was startled to discover, as her hand reached for the gold ce, that she felt the eager, desperate, tremulous hope of a young on her first job the hope that she would be able to deserve it.

"Yes, sir," she said, her eyes lowered.

* *

Owen Kellogg arrived on the afternoon of her third day in valley

He did not know which shocked him most the sight of her ding on the edge of the airfield as he descended from the pl he sight of her clothes her delicate transparent blouse tai the most expensive shop in New York, and the wide,

print skirt she had bought in the valley for sixty cents—her car... her bandages or the basket of groceries on her arm

He descended among a group of men, he saw her, he stopped, then ran to her as if flung forward by some emotion so strong that whatever its nature it looked like terror

'Miss Taggart he whispered—and said nothing else, while she laughed trying to explain how she had come to beat him to the destination

He listened as if it were irrelevant, and then he uttered the thing from which he had to recover, "But we thought you were dead"

Who thought it?'

"All of us I mean everybody in the outside world"

Then she suddenly stopped smiling, while his voice began to re-capture his story and his first sound of joy

"Miss Taggart, don t you remember? You told me to phone Winston, Colorado and to tell them that you d be there by noon of the next day That was to be the day before yesterday May thirty first But you did not reach Winston—and by late afternoon the news was on all the radios that you were lost in a plane crash somewhere in the Rocky Mountains"

She nodded slowly, grasping the events she had not thought of considering

"I heard it aboard the Comet," he said "At a small station in the middle of New Mexico The conductor held us there for an hour, while I helped him to check the story on long-distance phones He was hit by the news just as I was They all were—the train crew the station agent, the switchmen. They huddled around me while I called the city rooms of newspapers in Denver and New York We didn t learn much. Only that you had left the Afton airfield just before dawn on May thirty first, that you seemed to be following some stranger s plane that the attendant had seen you go off south east—and that nobody had seen you since . . . And that searching parties were combing the Rockies for the wreckage of your plane"

She asked involuntarily, "Did the Comet reach San Francisco?"

"I don't know She was crawling north through Arizona, when I gave up There were too many delays, too many things going wrong, and a total confusion of orders I got off and spent the night hitchhiking my way to Colorado, bumming rides on trucks on buggies, on horse carts, to get there on time—to get to our meeting place, I mean, where we gather for Midas' ferry plane to pick us up and bring us here."

She started walking slowly up the path toward the car she had left in front of Hammond s Grocery Market. Kellogg followed, and when he spoke again, his voice dropped a little, slowing down with their steps, as if there were something they both wished to delay

"I got a job for Jeff Allen," he said, his voice had the peculiarly solemn tone proper for saying I have carried out your last will. "Your agent at Laurel grabbed him and put him to the

moment we got there The agent needed every able bodied—no, able-minded—man he could find '

They had reached the car, but she did not get in

"Miss Taggart, you weren t hurt badly, were you? Did you say ou crashed, but it wasn t serious?'

"No not serious at all I'll be able to get along without Mr lulligan s car by tomorrow—and in a day or two I won t need this ung, either" She swung her cane and tossed it contemptuously ito the car They stood in silence, she was waiting

"The last long-distance call I made from that station in New lexico" he said slowly, "was to Pennsylvania I spoke to Hank tearden I told him everything I knew He listened, and then there vas a pause and then he said, 'Thank you for calling me Kel oggs eyes were lowered, he added, "I never want to hear that kind f pause again as long as I live"

He raised his eyes to hers, there was no reproach in his glance, only the knowledge of that which he had not suspected when he heard her request, but had guessed since

"Thank you," she said and threw the door of the car open "Can I give you a lift? I have to get back and get dinner ready before my employer comes home"

It was in the first moment of returning to Galt s house, of stand

and the courage that fed it—as she wanted to fight for the Comet that crawled by a last effort across a desert on a crumbling track She shuddered, closing her eyes, feeling as if she were guilty of double treason, feeling as if she were suspended in space between this valley and the rest of the earth with no right to either

The feeling vanished when she sat facing Galt across the dinner table He was watching her, openly and with an untroubled look as if her presence were normal—and as if the sight of her were all he wished to allow into his consciousness

She leaned back a little, as if complying with the meaning of his glance, and said dryly, efficiently, in deliberate denial "I have checked your shirts and found one with two buttons missing and another with the left elbow worn through. Do you wish me to mend them?"

"Why yes—if you can do it."

"I can do it"

It did not seem to alter the nature of his glance It merely seemed to stress its satisfaction, as if this were what he had wist her to say—except that she was not certain whether was the name for the thing she saw in his eyes and fully c that he had not wished her to say anything

Beyond the window, at the edge of the table, storm

had wiped out the last remnants of light in the eastern sky Sh wondered why she felt a sudden reluctance to look out, why sh felt as if she wanted to cling to the golden patches of light on th wood of the table, on the buttered crust of the rolls, on the coppe coffee pot, on Galt's hair—to cling as to a small island on the edg of a void

Then she heard her own voice asking suddenly, involuntarily and she knew that this was the treason she had wanted to escape "Do you permit any communication with the outside world?"

"No"

"Not any? Not even a note without return address?"

"No"

"Not even a message, if no secret of yours were given away?

"Not from here Not during this month Not to outsiders at an time"

She noticed that she was avoiding his eyes, and she forced herse to lift her head and face him His glance had changed, it wa watchful, unmoving, implacably perceptive He asked, looking her as if he knew the reason of her query, "Do you wish to ask fo a special exception?"

"No," she answered, holding his glance.

Next morning, after breakfast, when she sat in her room, care fully placing a patch on the sleeve of Galt's shirt, with her door ... nfamiliar task,

... heard

... anger

She rose to her feet, b... stopped: she heard his voice, its tone ... to the shock of some

... at sounded steady, but

She sat down on her bed, feeling suddenly drained of strength the voice was Francisco's

She heard Galt asking, his tone severe with concern, "What is it?"

"I'll tell you afterwards"

"Why are you so late?"

"I have to leave again in an hour"

"To *leave?*"

"John, I just came to tell you that I won't be able to stay here this year."

There was a pause, then Galt asked gravely, his voice low, "Is it as bad as that—whatever it is?"

"Yes I . . . I might be back before the month is over I don't know" He added, with the sound of a desperate effort, "I don't know whether to hope to be done with it quickly or . . . or not."

"Francisco, could you stand a shock right now?"

"I? Nothing could shock me now"

"There's a person, here, in my guest room,

see. It will be a shock to you, so I think I'd better warn you in advance that this person is still a scab"

"*What*? A scab? In *your* house?"

"Let me tell you how—"

"That's something I want to see for myself!"

She heard Francisco's contemptuous chuckle and the rush of his steps, she saw her door flung open, and she noticed dimly that it was Galt who closed it, leaving them alone

She did not know how long Francisco stood looking at her, because the first moment that she grasped fully was when she saw [illegible] her legs, the

When he raised his head, he looked as she had felt when she had opened her eyes in the valley he looked as if no pain had ever existed in the world He was laughing

[illegible] as if a confes-
were repeating
hat it had ever
k when he made
you, darling I

[illegible] you, I always will—don't be afraid for me I don't care if I'll never have you again, what does that matter?—you're alive and you're here and you know everything now And it's so simple, isn't it? Do you see what it was and why I had to desert you?' His arm swept out to point at the valley "There it is—it's *your* earth, *your* kingdom, *your* kind of world—Dagny, I've always loved you and that I deserted you, *that* was my love"

He took her hands and pressed them to his lips and held them, not moving, not as a kiss, but as a long moment of rest, as if the effort of speech were a distraction from the fact of her presence, and as if he were torn by too many things to say, by the pressure of all the words stored in the silence of years

"The women I chased—you didn't believe that, did you? I've never touched one of them—but I think you knew it, I think you've known it all along The playboy—it was a part that I had to play in order not to let the looters suspect me while I was destroying d'Anconia Copper in plain sight of the whole world. That's the joker in their system, they're out to fight any man of honor and ambition, but let them see a worthless rotter and they think he's a friend, they think he's safe—*safe*!—that's their view of life, but are they learning!—are they learning whether evil is safe and [illegible] competence practical! . . . Dagny, it was the night when I [illegible] for the first time, that I loved you—it was then that I knew I [illegible] to go It was when you entered my hotel room, that night

I saw what you looked like what you were what you meant to me
—and what awaited you in the future Had you been less you might
have stopped me for a while E ... he final
argument that made me leave
—against John Galt But I k
against me though neither, you nor he could know it You ...
everything that he was seeking everything he told us to live for or
die if necessary I was ready for him when he called me sud-
denly to come to New York that spring I had not heard from him
for some time He was fighting the same problem I was He solved
it Do you remember? It was the time when you did not hear
from me for three years Dagny when I took over my father's
... industrial system o...
... the evil
... w the tax
... mildew o...
d Anconia Copper draining us by no right that anyone could name—
I saw the government regulations passed to cripple me, because I
was successful and to help my competitors because they were
loafing failures—I saw the labor unions who won every claim
against me by reason of my ability to make their livelihood pos-
sible—I saw that any man's desire for money he could not earn was
regarded as a righteous wish but if he earned it it was damned
as greed—I saw the politicians who winked at me telling me not
to worry because I could just work a little harder and outsmart
them all I looked past the profits of the moment and I saw that
the harder I worked the more I tightened the noose around my
throat I saw that my energy was being poured down a sewer
that the parasites who fed on me were being fed upon in their
turn that they were caught in their own trap—and that there
was no reason for it no answer known to anyone that the sewer
pipes of the world draining its productive blood led into some
dank fog nobody had dared to pierce while people merely shrugged
and said that life on earth could be nothing but evil And then
I saw that the whole industrial establishment of the world, with
all of its magnificent machinery its thousand ton furnaces its
transatlantic cables its mahogany offices its stock exchanges, its
blazing electric signs its power its wealth—all of it was run, not
by bankers and boards of directors but by any unshaved humani-
tarian in any basement beer joint by any face pudgy with malice
who preached that virtue must be penalized for being virtue that
the purpose of ability is to serve incompetence that man has no
right to exist except for the sake of others I knew it. I saw
no way to fight it John found the way There were just the two
of us with him the night when we came to New York in answer
to his call Ragnar and I He told us what we had to do and what
sort of men we had to reach He had quit the Twentieth Century
He was living in a garret in a slum neighborhood He stepped to
the window and pointed at the skyscrapers of the city He said
that we had to extinguish the lights of the world and when we
would see the lights of New York go out, we

our job was done He did not ask us to join him at once He told us to think it over and to weigh everything it would do to our lives I gave him my answer on the morning of the second day, and Ragnar a few hours later, in the afternoon Dagny, that was the morning after our last night together I had seen, in a manner of vision that I couldn't escape, what it was that I had to fight for. It was for th

e way you

when we

rock over

ou, to let

you find your city—not to let you stumble the years of your life away, struggling on through a poisoned fog, with your eyes still held straight ahead, still looking as they had looked in the sunlight struggling on to find, at the end of your road, not the towers of a city, but a fat, soggy, mindless cripple performing his enjoyment of life by means of swallowing the gin *your* life had gone to pay for! *You*—to know no joy in order that *he* may know it? *You*—to serve as fodder for the pleasure of others? *You*—as the means for the subhuman as the end? Dagny, that was what I saw and that was what I couldn't let them do to you! Not to you, not to any child who had

y man

being

love,

and I

uld be

...ing with every year of the battle But you see it now, don't you? You've seen this valley It's the place we set out to reach when we were children, you and I We've reached it What else can I ask for now? Just to see you here—did John say you're still a scab?—oh well, it's only a matter of time, but you'll be one of us, because you've always been, if you don't see it fully we'll wait, I don't care—so long as you're alive, so long as I don't have to go on flying over the Rockies, looking for the wreckage of your plane!"

She gasped a little, realizing why he had not come to the valley on time

He laughed "Don't look like that Don't look at me as if I were a wound that you're afraid to touch"

"Francisco, I've hurt you in so many different ways—"

"No! No, you haven't hurt me—and he hasn't either, don't say anything about it, it's he who's hurt, but we'll save him and he'll come here ... then he too

I

or

...osed her eyes, pressing her lips together not to ...

"Darling, don't! Don't you see that I've accepted it?"

But it isn't—she thought—it isn't he, and I can't tell you ... truth, because it's a man who might never hear it from me ... whom I might never have

"Francisco, I did love you—" she said, and caught her

shocked realizing that she had not intended to say it and, simulta neously that this was not the tense she had wanted to use.

But you do he said calmly smiling You still love me—even if there s one expression of it that you ll always feel and want, but will not give me any longer I m still what I was, and you'll always see it and you ll always grant me the same response even if there s a greater one that you grant to another man No matter what you feel for him it will not change what you feel for me and it won t be treason to either because it comes from the same root it s the same payment in answer to the same values No matter what happens in the future we ll always be what we were to each other you and I because you ll always love me

Francisco she whispered do you know that?

Of course Don t you understand it now? Dagny every form of happiness is one every desire is driven by the same motor—by our love for a single value for the highest potentiality of our own existence—and every achievement is an expression of it. Look around you Do you see how much is open to us here on an unob structed earth? Do you see how much I am free to do to experi ence to achieve? Do you see that all of it is part of what you are to me—as I am part of it for you? And if I ll see you smile with admiration at a new copper smelter that I built, it will be anothe form of what I felt when I lay in bed beside you Will I want to sleep with you? Desperately Will I envy the man who does? Sure But what does that matter? It s so much—just to have you here to love you and to be alive "

Her eyes lowered her face stern, holding her head bowed as i an act of reverence she said slowly, as if fulfilling a solemn prom ise "Will you forgive me?

He looked astonished then chuckled gaily remembering an answered "Not yet There s nothing to forgive but I'll forgive when you join us

He rose he drew her to her feet—and when his arms close about her their kiss was the summation of their past, its end an their seal of acceptance

Galt turned to them from across the living room when the came out He had been stand ng at a window looking at the valle —and she felt certain that he had stood there all that time Sl saw his eyes studying their faces his glance moving slowly fro one to the other His face relaxed a little at the sight of the chan in Francisco s

Francisco smiled asking h m "Why do you stare at me?"

"Do you know what you looked like when you came in?"

"Oh d d I? That s because I hadn t slept for three nights Joh w ll you invite me to dinner? I want to know how this scab of you got here but I think that I might collapse sound asleep in th middle of a sentence—even though right now I feel as if I'll neve need any sleep at all—so I think I d better go home and stay the t'll evening "

Galt was watching him with a faint smile "But aren t you goi › leave the valley in an hour?"

"What? No " he said mildly in momentary astonishment. "No " he laughed exultantly "I dont have to! Thats right I haven't told you what it was have I? I was searching for Dagny For for the wreck of her plane She d been reported lost in a crash in the Rockies "

"I see" [illegible]

[illegible] Afton, Utah and Winston, Colorado over every peak and crevice of it, over every remnant of a car in any gully below and whenever I saw one I— He stopped it looked like a shudder "Then at night, we went out on foot—the searching parties of rail road men from Winston—we went climbing at random with no clues, no plan, on and on, until it was daylight again and— He shrugged, trying to dismiss it and to smile I wouldnt wish it on my worst—"

He stopped short his smile vanished and a dim reflection of the look he had worn for three days came back to his face as if at the sudden presence of an image he had forgotten

After a long moment, he turned to Galt John" his vo ce sounded peculiarly solemn "could we notify those outside that Dagny is alive in case theres somebody who who d feel as I did?"

Galt was looking straight at him Do you wish to give any outsider any relief from the consequences of rema ning outside?

Francisco dropped his eyes but answered firmly No"

"P ty Francisco?"

"Yes Forget it. Youre right."

Galt turned away with a movement that seemed oddly out of character it had the unrhythmical abruptness of the involuntary

He did not turn back Francisco watched him in astonishment, then asked sof [illegible]

Ga [illegible] wering She could [illegible] s of Galts face [illegible] ain and of something greater that seemed to make these concepts superflu ous

"Whatever any of us has paid for this battle" said Galt, "youre the one whos taken the hardest beating arent you?"

"Who? I?" Francisco grinned with shocked, incredulous amusement. "Certainly not! Whats the matter with you?" He chuckled and added, "Pity John?

"No " said Galt firmly

She saw Francisco watch ng h m with a faint puzzled frown—because Galt had said it, looking not at him but at her

* *

The emotional sum that struck her as an immediate of Franciscos house when she entered it for the first time [illegible] the sum she had once drawn from the sight of its

exterior She felt, not a sense of tragic loneliness, but of invigorating brightness The rooms were bare and crudely simple, the house seemed built with the skill, the decisiveness and the impatience typical of Francisco, it looked like a frontiersman s shanty thrown together to serve as a mere springboard for a long flight into the future—a future where so great a field of activity lay waiting that no time could be wasted on the comfort of its start The place had the brightness, not of a home, but of a fresh wooden scaffolding erected to shelter the birth of a skyscraper

Francisco in shirt sleeves, stood in the middle of his twelve-foot square living room, with the look of a host in a palace Of all the places where she had ever seen him, this was the background that seemed most properly his Just as the simplicity of his clothes, added to his bearing, gave him the air of a superlative aristocrat, so the crudeness of the room gave it the appearance of the most patrician retreat a single royal touch was added to the crudeness two ancient silver goblets stood in a small niche cut in a wall of bare logs their ornate design had required the luxury of some craftsman s long and costly labor, more labor than had gone to build the shanty, a design dimmed by the polish of more centuries than had gone to grow the log wall s pines In the midst of that room, F [illegible] d a touch of quiet pride, [illegible] This is what I am and [illegible]

She looked up at the silver goblets

"Yes, he said, in answer to her silent guess, "they belonged to Sebastián d Anconia and his wife That's the only thing I brought here from my palace in Buenos Aires That, and the crest over the door It s all I wanted to save Everything else will go, in a very few months now He chuckled "They'll seize it, all of it, the last dregs of d Anconia Copper, but they ll be surprised They won't find much for their trouble And as to that palace, they won't be able to afford even its heating bill"

"And then?" she asked 'Where will you go from there?"

"I? I will go to work for d Anconia Copper."

"What do you mean?

"Do you remember that old slogan 'The king is dead, long live the king'? When the carcass of my ancestors' property is out of the way, then my mine will become the young new body of d Anconia Copper, the kind of property my ancestors had wanted, had worked for, had deserved, but had never owned"

'*Your* mine? What mine? Where?"

"Here" he said, pointing toward the mountain peaks "Didn't you know it?"

"No"

"I own a copper mine that the looters won't reach It's here, in these mountains I did the prospecting, I discovered it, I broke the first excavation It was over eight years ago I was the first man to whom Midas sold land in this valley I bought that mine I started it with my own hands, as Sebastián d Anconia had started. I have a superintendent in charge of it now, who used to be my best

copper we require That will be all I ll all I'll need "

ice sounded on his rence between that

a and the shameful mawkish tone half whine half threat, the tone of beggar and thug combined, which the men of their century had given to the word "need "

"Dagny " he was saying standing at the window as if looking out at the peaks not of mountains but of time the rebirth of d'Ancoma Copper—and of the world—has to start here in the United States This country was the only country in history born, not of chance and blind tribal warfare but as a rational product of man s mind. This country was built on the supremacy of rea son—and for one magnificent century it redeemed the world It will have to do so again The first step of d Ancoma Copper as of any other human value has to come from here—because the rest of the earth has reached the consummation of the beliefs it has held through the ages mystic faith, the supremacy of the irrational which has but two monuments at the end of its course the luna tic asylum and the graveyard Sebastián d Ancoma com mitted one error he accepted a system which declared that the property he had earned by right was to be his not by right, but by perm ... ror I have made th ... day when grow m ... the smelters the or ... gain through the w ... ll be the first to start my country s rebuilding I may see it but I cannot be certa n No man can predict the time when others will choose to return to reason. It may be that at the end of my life I shall have es tablished nothing but this single mine—d Ancoma Copper No 1 Galt's Gulch Colorado U.S.A. But, Dagny do you remember that my amb ... product on of copper? Da ... e pound of cop pe ... ier than all my an ... that one pound will be m ne by rig! t and will be used to ma ntain a world that knows it!"

This was the Francisco of their ch ldhood in bearing in man ner n ... es—and she found her ... had questioned the shore of the future

n as your ankle recovers completely We have to climb a steep trail to get there just a mule trail there s no truck road as yet. Let me show you the new smelter I m designing I ve been working on it for some time its too complex for our present volume of produ tion when the mines output grows to just fy it—just take a look time labor and money that it will save!"

They were sitting together on the floor bending over the sheets of paper he spread before her, studying the intricate sections of the smelter—with the same joyous earnestness they had once brought to the study of scraps in a junk yard

She leaned forward just as he moved to reach for another sheet, and she found herself leaning against his shoulder Involuntarily she held still for one instant, no longer than for a small break in the flow of a single motion while her eyes rose to his He was looking down at her neither hiding what he felt nor implying any further demand She drew back, knowing that she had felt the same desire as his

Then still holding the recaptured sensation of what she had felt for him in the past she grasped a quality that had always been part of it now suddenly clear to her for the first time if that desire was a celebration of one's life then what she had felt for Francisco had always been a celebration of her future, like a moment of splendor gained in part payment of an unknown total affirming some promise to come In the instant when she grasped it, she knew also the only desire she had ever experienced not in token of the future but of the full and final present She knew it by means of an image—the image of a man's figure standing at the door of a small granite structure The final form of the promise that had kept her moving she thought was the man who would perhaps, remain a promise never to be reached.

But this—she thought in consternation—was that view of human destiny which she had most passionately hated and rejected the view that man was ever to be drawn by some vision of the unattainable shining ahead, doomed ever to aspire but not to achieve. *Her* life and *her* values could not bring her to that she thought she had never found beauty in longing for the impossible and had never found the possible to be beyond her reach But she had come to it and she could find no answer

She could not give him up or give up the world—she thought, looking at Galt that evening The answer seemed harder to find in his presence She felt that no problem existed that nothing could stand beside the fact of seeing him and nothing would ever have the power to make her leave—and simultaneously, that she would have no right to look at him if she were to renounce her railroad She felt that she owned him that the unnamed had been understood between them from the start—and simultaneously, that [illegible]

looked as if this were a matter about which he did not choose to feel

Her faint apprehension grew into a question mark, and the question mark turned into a drill cutting deeper and deeper into mind through the evenings that followed—when Galt left

house and she remained alone He went out every other night, r dinner not telling her where he went, returning at midnight later She tried not to allow herself fully to discover with what ion and restlessness she waited for his return She did not ask where he spent his evenings The reluctance that stopped her her too urgent desire to know, she kept silent in some dimly ntional form of defiance, half in defiance of him, half of her

feared or give them by the ugly, nagging a savage resentment which was her answer the dread that there might be a woman in his life yet the resentment was softened by some quality of health in the thing she red, as if the threat could be fought and even, if need be ac ted But there was another, uglier dread the sordid shape of -sacrifice, the suspicion, not to be uttered about him, that he hed to remove himself from her path and let its emptiness force back to the man who was his best loved friend

Days passed before she spoke of it Then, at dinner, on an ning when he was to leave, she became suddenly aware of the uliar pleasure she experienced while watching him eat the d she had prepared—and suddenly involuntarily, as if that asure gave her a right she dared not identify, as if enjoyment, pain, broke her resistance she heard herself asking him, "What it you're doing every other evening?

He answered simply, as if he had taken for granted that she w it, "Lecturing"

"What?"

"Giving a course of lectures on physics, as I do every year during month. Its my . . What are you laughing at? he asked, ing the look of relief, of silent laughter that did not seem be directed at his words—and then before she answered, he e saw some was almost impersonal, t this is the professions uard Halley is to give concerts, Kay Ludlow is to appear in plays written by authors who do not write for the outside rld—and I give lectures, reporting on the work I've done during year"

"Free lectures?"

"Certainly not It's ten dollars per person for the course"

"I want to hear you."

He shook his head. "No You'll be allowed to attend the con ts, the plays or any form of presentation for your own enjoyment but not my lectures or any other sale of ideas which ght carry out of this valley Besides, my customers, or s only those who have a practical purpose in taking my

Dwight Sanders, Lawrence Hammond, Dick McNamara, Owen Kellogg a few others I ve added one beginner this year Quentin Daniels'

Really? she said almost with a touch of jealousy "How can he afford anything that expensive?'

On credit I ve given him a time payment plan He's worth it"

Where do you lecture?'

"In the hangar, on Dwight Sanders' farm"

'And where do you work during the year?"

'In my laboratory"

She asked cautiously, "Where is your laboratory? Here, in the valley?"

He held her eyes for a moment, letting her see that his glance was amused and that he knew her purpose, then answered, "No"

'You ve lived in the outside world for all of these twelve years?"

Yes"

"Do you —the thought seemed unbearable—"do you hold some such job as the others?'

Oh yes The amusement in his eyes seemed stressed by some special meaning

Don t tell me that you re a second assistant bookkeeper!"

'No I m not'

"Then what do you do?'

I hold the kind of job that the world wishes me to hold"

"Where?

He shook his head 'No, Miss Taggart If you decide to leave the valley, this is one of the things that you are not to know"

He smiled again with that insolently personal quality which now seemed to say that he knew the threat contained in his answer and what it meant to her, then he rose from the table

When he had gone, she felt as if the motion of time were an oppressive weight in the stillness of the house, like a stationary, half-solid mass slithering slowly into some faint elongation by a tempo that left her no measure to know whether minutes had passed or hours She lay half stretched in an armchair of the living room, crumpled by that heavy, indifferent lassitude which is *not the will* to laziness, but the frustration of the will to a secret violence that no lesser action can satisfy

That special pleasure she had felt in watching him eat the food she had prepared—she thought, lying still, her eyes closed, her mind moving like time, through some realm of veiled slowness—it had been the pleasure of knowing that she had provided him with a sensual enjoyment, that one form of his body's satisfaction had come from her There is reason, she thought, why a woman would wish to cook for a man , oh, not as a duty, not as a chronic career, only as a rare and special rite in symbol of , but what have they made of it, the preachers 'e duty?

. The castrated performance of a sick / was held to be a woman s proper virtue—while, it

eaning and sanction was held as a shameful sin the work of eek ng k tchen ance w th her bedroom was to an animal
w ш по g ory meaning or pride of spirit to be claimed y the animals involved.

She leaped abruptly to her feet She did not want to th nk of the uter world or of its moral code But she knew that that was not e subject of her thoughts And she did not want to th nk of the ib ect her mind was intent on pursuing the subject to which it ept returning against her will by some w ll of ts own

She paced the room hating the ugly jerky uncontrolled loose ss of her movements—torn between the need to let her mot on reak the stillness and the knowledge that this was not the form break she wanted She lighted cigarettes for an instant s illusion purposeful action—and discarded them within another instant eling the weary d

om like a
r a motive
polish—w
ith ng seem

its a screen to hide a wish thats worth too much what do you ant? She snapped a match viciously jerk ng the flame the tip of a cigarette she noticed hanging unl ghted in the rner of her mouth. What do you want?—repeated the vo ce at sounded severe as a judge I want him to come back —she swered throwing the words as a soundless cry at some accuser thin her almost as one would throw a bone to a pursu ng beast, the hope of distracting it from pouncing upon the rest

I want him back—she said softly in answer to the accusation at there was no reason for so great an impatience I want n back—she said pleadingly in answer to the cold reminder that r answer d d not balance the judges scale I want him ck!—she cried defiantly fighting not to drop the one superfluous otective word in that sentence

She felt her head drooping with exhaustion, as after a prolonged ating. The cigarette she saw between her fingers had burned the re length of half an inch She ground it out and fell into the mchair again.

I'm not evading it—she thought—I m not evading it its just it I can see no way to any answer That wh ch you want—d the vo ce while she stumbled through a thickening fog—is urs for the taking but anything less than your full acceptance ything less than your full convict on, is a betrayal of everything is. Then let him damn me—she thought as if the vo ce re now lost in the fog and would not hear her—let h m d tomorrow I want h m back She heard swer because her head had fallen softly aga nst the cha r s asleep

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The castrated *performance* of a sickening drudgery was held to be a woman's proper virtue—while that which gave it

ning and sanction was held as a shameful sin the work of ing with grease, steam and slimy peelings in a reeking kitchen held to be a spiritual matter, an act of compliance with her al duty—while the meeting of two bodies in a bedroom was to be a physical indulgence, an act of surrender to an animal nct, with no glory, meaning or pride of spirit to be claimed he animals involved.

he leaped abruptly to her feet. She did not want to think of the r world or of its moral code But she knew that that was not subject of her thoughts And she did not want to think of the ect her mind was intent on pursuing, the subject to which it returning against her will, by some will of its own

he paced the room, hating the ugly, jerky, uncontrolled loose of her movements—torn between the need to let her motion [illegible] was not the form [illegible] an instant's illusion [illegible] in another instant, [illegible] She looked at the [illegible] like a restless beggar, pleading with physical objects to give a motive, wishing she could find something to clean, to mend, polish—while knowing that no task was worth the effort When ing seems worth the effort—said some stern voice in her mind 's a screen to hide a wish that's worth too much, what do you it? . She snapped a match, viciously jerking the flame the tip of a cigarette she noticed hanging, unlighted in the ner of her mouth . . . What do you want?—repeated the voice t sounded severe as a judge I want him to come back'—she wered, throwing the words, as a soundless cry, at some accuser hin her, almost as one would throw a bone to a pursuing beast, the hope of distracting it from pouncing upon the rest

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When she opened her eyes, she saw him standing three feet away looking down at her, as if he had been watching her for some time

She saw his face and, with the clarity of undivided perception, she saw the meaning of the expression on his face it was the meaning she had fought for hours She saw it without astonishment because she had not yet regained her awareness of any reason why it should astonish her

"This is the way you look," he said softly, "when you fall asleep in your office" and she knew that he, too, was not fully aware of letting her hear it the way he said it told her how often he had thought of it and for what reason "You look as if you would awaken in a world where you had nothing to hide or to fear," and she knew that the first movement of her face had been a smile she knew it in the moment when it vanished when she grasped that they were both awake He added quietly, with full awareness, "But here it's true"

Her first emotion of the realm of reality was a sense of power She sat up with a flowing leisurely movement of confidence, feeling the flow of the motion from muscle to muscle through her body She asked and it was the slowness the sound of casual curiosity, the tone of taking the implications for granted, that gave to her voice the faintest sound of disdain "How did you know what I look like in my office?"

"I told you that I've watched you for years"

[illegible] where [illegible]

[illegible] pause, then the lower, huskier tone of her voice left a hint of [illegible] triumph to trail behind her words "When did you see me for the first time?"

"Ten years ago" he answered, looking straight at her letting her see that he was answering the full, unnamed meaning of her question

"Where?" The word was almost a command

He hesitated then she saw a faint smile that touched only his lips not his eyes the kind of smile with which one contemplates—with longing bitterness and pride—a possession purchased at an excruciating cost his eyes seemed directed, not at her, but at the girl of that time "Underground in the Taggart Terminal" he answered

She became suddenly conscious of her posture she had let her shoulder blades slide down against the chair, carelessly, half-lying, one leg stretched forward—and with her sternly tailored transparent blouse, her wide peasant skirt hand printed in violent colors, her thin stocking and high heeled pump, she did not look like a railroad [illegible] her in answer to his eyes

[illegible] ed like that

[illegible] when some

[illegible] es removed

[illegible] y the act of

ng her immediate person She met his eyes with that insolent
ace which is a smile without movement of facial muscles

steps were
wanted to
l for longer
vatched the
egun in one
er certainty

t her body had become an instrument for the direct perception
his, like a screen reflecting both movements and motives—she
or
om
his
wn
the

ion
as
ser-

ow,

scream within her, and she groped, stunned for its cause—
had
long
lips,
was
and she dropped all thoughts of ... hose
s the power

"I've seen you many times since," he said quietly, steadily, but
ittle more slowly than usual, as if he could control everything
cept his need to speak.

"Where have you seen me?"

"Many places"

"But you made certain to remain unseen?" She knew that his
s a face she could not have failed to notice

"Yes."

"Why? Were you afraid?"

"Yes"

He said it simply, and it took her a moment to realize that he
s admitting he knew what the sight of his person would have
ant to her "Did you know who I was, when you saw me for
first time?"

"Oh yes My worst enemy but one"

"What?" She had not expected it, she added, more quietly,
ho s the worst one?"

"Dr Robert Stadler"

"Did you have me classified with him?"

"No He's ... He's the man who sold his soul
ou—you were one of us I kne
also that you would be the
defeat."

if we were fellow survivors from some vanishing age or land m

The mortal sin of Rol

alone to pursue it, he wanted to brush people out of his pa
and he never identified the means to it or the nature of his path
of his enemies He took a short cut Are you smiling, Miss Tagg
You hate him, don't you? Yes, you know the kind of short cu
took He told you that we were rivals for these three stud
That was true—or rather, that was not the way I thought of it, b
knew that he did Well if we were rivals, I had one advantag
knew why they needed both our professions, he never unders

always been a very lonely man I think that in the whole of his
Francisco and Ragnar were his only love and John was his
passion It was John whom he regarded as his particular heir, as
future, as his own immortality John intended to be an inve
which meant that he was to be a physicist, he was to take his
graduate course under Robert Stadler Francisco intended to
after graduation and go to work, he was to be the perfect blen
both of us, his two intellectual fathers an industrialist And Ra
—you didn't know what profession Ragnar had chosen, Miss
gart? No, it wasn t stunt pilot or jungle explorer, or deep-sea d
It was something much more courageous than these Ragnar
tended to be a philosopher An abstract, theoretical academic,
tered ivory tower philosopher Yes, Robert Stadler loved t
And yet—I have said that I would have killed to protect them

only name of honc
the looters He was
of the looters' guns
came back for his
finish it He left, on the day when Robert Stadler endorsed
establishment of a State Science Institute I met Stadler by ch
in a corridor of the
last com
never h
saw me
him whi

voice reminding her that there would, perhaps, never be any truth of this kind to learn.

Some part of her felt a dim tension as she watched the way Galt looked at Francisco it was an open simple unreserved glance of surrender to an unreserved feeling She felt the anxious wonder she

[illegible]

for it." We dont have many men to spare We had to [illegible]

"You [illegible] of manpower and [illegible] build a railroad

[illegible] idden, eager shot [illegible] in his voice "I [illegible] but its such a difficult job that the [illegible] es output wont justify it at present"

"Nonsense! Its much simpler than it looks There's a pass to the east where there's an easier grade and softer stone I watched it on the way up, it wouldnt take so many curves three miles of rail or less would do it"

She was pointing east, she did not notice the intensity with which the two men were watching her face

"Just a narrow-gauge track is all you'll need like the first railroads . . . that's where the first railroads started—at mines only they were coal mines Look, do you see that ridge? There's [illegible] you wouldnt need to do [illegible] w rise for a [illegible] than a four

glance that the costliest part of the job will be a couple of steel trestles—and there s one spot where I might have to blast a tunnel but it s only for a hundred feet or less I ll need a steel trestle to throw the track across that gorge and bring it here, but it s not as

expected them to be there as if she were giving orders on a con struction site where details of this kind were not to delay her

"Let me give you a rough idea of what I mean If we drive diagonal piles into the rock'—she was sketching rapidly—"the actual steel span would be only six hundred feet long—it would cut off this last half mile of your corkscrew turns—I could have the rail laid in three months and—'

She stopped When she looked up at their faces, the fire had gone out of hers She crumpled her sketch and flung it aside into the red dust of the gravel "Oh, what for?" she cried, the despair breaking out for the first time "To build three miles of railroad and abandon a transcontinental system!"

The two men were looking at her, she saw no reproach in their faces, only a look of understanding which was almost compassion

"I'm sorry,' she said quietly, dropping her eyes

"If you change your mind," said Francisco "I ll hire you on the

She raised her eyes, knowing that they knew the nature of her despair and that is was useless to hide her struggle "I've tried it once," she said "I've tried to give it up . I know what it will mean I ll think of it with every crosstie I'll see laid here, with every spike driven I ll think of that other tunnel and . .

hear the whole course of the last agony of Taggart Transcontinental. You'll hear about every wreck You'll hear about every discontinued train. You'll hear about every abandoned line You'll hear about the collapse of the Taggart Bridge Nobody stays in this valley except by a full, conscious choice based on a full, conscious knowl edge of every fact involved in his decision Nobody stays here by faking reality in any manner whatever "

She looked at him, her head lifted, knowing what chance he was

first time—she felt an enormous pride for the tight, clean face of man before her—he saw the shape of her mouth

f-control yet softened by some tremulous emotion while she swered quietly, "Thank you You're right"
"You don't have to answer me now he said You'll tell me ien you've decided There's still a week left."
"Yes" he ... ...
'ded it neatly and
decision consider
verything about it.
by shingling roofs
find out where I
He smiled "It was John who told me The destroyer remember? ou wondered why the destroyer had not sent anyone after you. ut he had It was he who sent me there"
"He sent you?"
"Yes"
"What did he say to you?"
"Nothing much. Why?"
"What did he say? Do you remember the exact words?"
"Yes I do remember He said If you want your chance take it ...
- turned to Galt with
John, I never quite
my chance?"
o, but—
Someone hailed him from the ledges of the mine and he went off wiftly as if the subject required no further attention.
She was ...
... could have no chance till he'd had every chance possible to um."
"How did you know what he had earned?"
"I had been questioning him about you for ten years every time I ould, in every way, from every angle No he did not tell me—it vas the way he spoke of you that did He didn't want to speak but ie spoke too eagerl ... ... and then I
The hint of derision remained in his eyes he knew that she wanted to hear this but that this was not the answer to the question she feared
She looked from his face to Francisco's approaching

hiding from herself any longer that her sudden heavy desolati anxiety was the fear that Galt might throw the three of them int the hopeless waste of self sacrifice

Francisco approached looking at her thoughtfully, as if weighing some ... rkle of

... to g

back, it will be the last, for a long time" There was no reproach and no sadness in his voice, only some softened quality as so evidence of emoti ... back—but it won ... live here permanei ... for years I d like ... to move to my h ... except that I d like you to ...

He said it simply ... the three of them S ... She felt some swift ... and almost vicious th ... her blindly into action

"But I m an employee" she said, with an odd smile, looking at Galt I have a job to finish."

"I won t hold you to it said Galt, and she felt anger at the tone of his voice a tone that granted her no hidden significance and answered nothing but the literal meaning of her words "You can quit the job any time you wish It s up to you

"No it isn t I m a prisoner here Don t you remember? I'm to take orders I have no preferences to follow, no wishes to express, no decisions to make I want the decision to be yours"

You want it to be mine?"

'*Yes!*'

"You ve expressed a wish"

The mockery of his voice was in its seriousness—and she threw at him ... ing

... org ... ad

... the defiance toward an adversary who was the sternest of teachers was all that Francisco had read in her face He shrugged, regretfully but gaily "You re probably right. If you can t prevent her from going back—nobody can"

She was not hearing F ... the magnitud ... relief th ... knew, on ... she knew ...

... seem to matter whe... stay here or return to the world, a week was like an endless

of time, either course seemed flooded by an unchanging sun—and no struggle was hard, she thought, if *this* was the nature of existence The relief did not come from the knowledge that he would not renounce her, nor from any assurance that she would win—the relief came from the certainty that he would always remain what he was

"I don't know whether I'll go back to the world or not," she said quietly, but her voice was trembling with subdued violence, which

ced at her and the glance was part amusement, part contempt's reproach,

to

m

n

She did not answer, but looked at him in open, undefensive admission.

He chuckled and looked away, and a few steps later said slowly, in the tone of a quotation, "Nobody stays here by faking reality in *any manner whatever*"

Part of the intensity of her relief—she thought, as she walked silently by his side—was the shock of a contrast she had seen, with sudden ry perception, an exact would have meant, if up the woman he wanted, t feeling out of existence t the cost to him and to then dragging the rest of his years through the waste of the unreached and unfulfilled—she, turning for consolation to a second choice, faking a love she did not feel, being willing to fake, since her will to self-deceit was the essential required for Galt's self sacrifice, then living out her years in hopeless longing, accepting, as relief for an unhealing wound, some moments of weary affection, plus the tenet that love is futile and happiness is not to be found on earth—Francisco, struggling in the elusive fog of a counterfeit reality, his life a fraud staged by the two who were dearest to him and most trusted, struggling to grasp what was missing from his happiness, struggling down the brittle scaffold of a lie over the abyss of the discovery that he was not the man she loved, but only a resented substitute, half-charity patient

the sho

into the

sible to man—the three of them, who had had all the gifts of existence spread out before them, ending up as embittered bulks, who cry in despair that life is frustration—the frustration of being able to make unreality real

But *this*—she thought—was men's moral code in

a code that told them to act on the premise of one another's weakness, deceit and stupidity, and this was the pattern of their lives, the struggle through a fog of the pretended and unacknowledged, the belief that facts are not solid or final, this state where, denying any form to reality, men stumble through life, unreal and unformed

light heartedness of her relief came from the knowledge that the battle was hard, no decision was dangerous where there was no soggy uncertainty, no shapeless evasion to encounter

"Did it ever occur to you, Miss Taggart," said Galt, in the casual tone of an abstract discussion, but as if he had known her thoughts, "that there is no conflict of interests among men, neither in business nor in trade nor in their most personal desires—if they omit the irrational from their view of the possible and destruction from their view of the practical? There is no conflict, and no call for sacrifice, and no man is a threat to the aims of another—if men understand that reality is an absolute not to be faked, that lies do not work, that the unearned cannot be had, that the undeserved cannot be given, that the destruction of a value which *is*, will not bring value to that which isn't The businessman who wishes to gain a market by throttling a superior competitor, the worker who wants a share of his employer's wealth, the artist who envies a rival's higher talent —they're all wishing facts out of existence, and destruction is the only means of their wish If t
market, a fortune or an imm.
production, employment and a
be achieved, whether the sacrificial victims are willing or not men will not cease to desire the impossible and will not lose their

He glanced at her and added slowly, a slight emphasis a change in the impersonal tone of his voice, "No one's happiness but *my own* is in my power to achieve or to destroy You should have had more respect for him and for me than to fear what you had feared"

She did not answer, she felt as if a word would overfill the fullness of this moment, she merely turned to him with a look of acquiescence that ... would have

a walk through the country by two people who were free for the pleasure of *motion* and sunlight, with no unsolved burdens left to carry. Her sense of lightness blended with the weightless sense of walking downhill, as *if* she needed no effort to walk, only to restrain herself from flying, and she walked, fighting the speed of the down-

d pull, her body leaning back, the wind blowing her skirt like a
to brake her motion

his wife—she thought, letting herself hear consciously the word
Akston had not pronounced, the word she had long since felt,
never named—for three weeks she had been his wife in every
se but one, and that final one was still to be earned, but this
ch was real and today she could permit herself to know it, to feel
to live with that

up at her
peared to
was only
that was
oug out that her mind was too full to notice She noticed it only

attle were people at the doors of the shops and standing still all
wn the street, looking up

"Is . . . is anyone expected?" she asked and was astonished by
e anxiety of her own voice

"No" said Hammond "Everyone who's got any business here is

ainst the sun. "Not an army model"

"Will the ray screen hold out?" she asked tensely, in a tone of
efensive resentment against the approach of an enemy

He chuckled "Hold out?"

"Will he see us?"

"That screen is safer than an underground vault, Miss Taggart.
s you ought to know"

The plane rose and for a moment

the matter with her voice—but she was running across the roo[illegible] down the path to the airfield not knowing that she was runnin[illegible] driven by a reason she had no time and no courage to name

She found Dwight Sanders at the small telescope of the contro[illegible] tower: he was watching the plane attentively, with a puzzled frow[illegible]

"Let me see it!" she snapped

She clutched the metal tube, she pressed her eye to the lens h[illegible] hand guiding the tube slowly to follow the plane—then he saw th[illegible] her hand had stopped but her fingers did not open and her fac[illegible] remained bent over the telescope, pressed to the lens until he looke[illegible] closer and saw that the lens was pressed to her forehead.

What's the matter Miss Taggart?'

She raised her head slowly

Is it anyone you know, Miss Taggart?"

She did not answer She hurried away, her steps rushing with th[illegible] zigzagging aimlessness of uncertainty—she dared not run but sh[illegible] had to escape she had to hide, she did not know whether she wa[illegible] afraid to be seen by the men around her or by the plane above—th[illegible] plane whose silver wings bore the number that belonged to Han[illegible] Rearden.

She stopped when she stumbled over a rock and fell and notice[illegible] that she had been running She was on a small ledge in the cliff[illegible] above the airfield hidden from the sight of the town open to th[illegible] view of the sky She rose her hands groping for support along [illegible] granite wall feeling the warmth of the sun on the rock under he[illegible] palms—she stood her back pressed to the wall unable to move o[illegible] to take her eyes off the plane

The plane was circling slowly, dipping down then rising again struggling—she thought—as she had struggled, to distinguish the sight of a wreck in a hopeless spread of crevices and boulders an elusive spread neither clear enough to abandon nor to survey He was searching for the wreck of her plane, he had not given up and whatever the three weeks of it had cost him, whatever he felt, the only evidence he would give to the world and his only answer was this steady insistent monotonous drone of a motor carrying a fragile craft over every deadly foot of an inaccessible chain of mounta[illegible]

Through the brilliant purity of the summer air, the plane seemed intimately close she could see it rock on precarious currents and bank under the thrusts of wind She could see, and it seemed im[illegible] possible that so clear a sight was closed to his eyes The whole of the valley lay below him flooded by sunlight flaming with glass panes and green lawns screaming to be seen—the end of his tor[illegible] tured quest the [illegible] wreck of her plane [illegible] all that he [illegible] before him [illegible] dive throug[illegible] the capacity to see Hank!" she screamed waving her arms [illegible] desperate signal "Hank!"

She fell back against the rock knowing that she had no way to reach him that she had no power to give him sight, that no powe[illegible]

on earth could pierce that screen except his own mind and vision Suddenly and for the first time, she felt the screen, not as the most ...ible, but as the most grimly absolute barrier in the world

...nped against the rock, she watched, in silent resignation, the ...ss circles of the plane's struggle and its motor's uncomplaining ...r help, a cry she had no way to answer The plane swooped abruptly, but it was only the start of its final rise, it cut a swift ...nal across the mountains and shot into the open sky Then, caught in the spread of a lake with no shores and no exit, it sinking slowly and drowning out of sight

...e thought in bitter compassion, of how much he had failed to And I?—she thought If she left the valley the screen would ... for her as tightly Atlantis would descend under a vault of more impregnable than the bottom of the ocean, and she, too, ...ld be left to struggle for the things she had not known how to ... she too, would be left to fight a mirage of primordial savagery, ...e the reality of all that she desired would never come again ...in her reach.

...ut the pull of the outer world, the pull that drew her to follow ... plane, was not the image of Hank Rearden—she knew that she ...ld not ...

... all others had long ...

... they were right to ...until they knew that they left no value behind them—but until ...d unless she saw that no chance was untaken and no battle un...ught, she had no right to remain among them. This was the ...uestion that had lashed her for weeks, but had not driven her to a ...limpse of the answer

She lay awake through the hours of that night, quietly motionless, ...ollowing—like an engineer and like Hank Rearden—a process of ...dispassionate, precise almost ... regard for cost or ... she lived it in a ... no answer She lo... faintly visible in ... called in their dar... ...was not hers to call

"Yes or no, Miss Taggart?"

She looked at the ... Mulligan's living ro... attentive... Frestonle... either ans... Midas M... rancor in...

... two thousand miles away, at this

sunset hour, the page of a calendar was springing into light over the roofs of New York, saying June 28—and it seemed to her suddenly that she was seeing it, as if it were hanging over the heads of these men

"I have one more day," she said steadily "Will you let me have ... of

' We ll wait after that as well " said Hugh Akston, "though in your absence if that be necessary "

She stood by the window, facing them, and she felt a moment's satisfaction in the knowledge that she stood straight, that her hand did not tremble that her voice sounded as controlled, uncomplaining and unpitying as theirs it gave her a moment's feeling of a bond to them

' If any part of your uncertainty," said Galt, "is a conflict between your heart and your mind—follow your mind "

"Consider the reasons which make us certain that we are right," said Hugh Akston, but not the fact that we are certain If you are not convinced ignore our certainty Don't be tempted to substitute our judgment for your own "

' Don t rely on our knowledge of what's best for your future," said Mulligan ' We do know, but it can t be best until *you* know it."

' Don t consider our interests or desires," said Francisco "You have no duty to anyone but yourself "

She smiled, neither sadly nor gaily, thinking that none of it was the sort of advice she would have been given in the outer world And knowing how desperately they wished to help her where no help was possible, she felt it was her part to give them reassurance

"I forced my way here,' she said quietly, "and I was to bear responsibility for the consequences I'm bearing it "

Her reward was to see Galt smile the smile was like a milita

well in an emergency, I'll be all right with her—and realized that she was thinking of herself

"Let it go till day after tomorrow, Miss Taggart," said Midas Mulligan 'Tonight you re still here "

"Thank you " she said

She remained by the window, while they went on discussing the valley's business, it was their closing conference of the month They d just finished dinner—and she thought of her first dinner in this

ouse a month ago, she was wearing as she had then worn the gray

y was an even deep deceptively clear blue that blended with the blue
invisible clouds into a single spread hiding the sun only the
flame and it
thought
he map of a

she heard Mulligan giving Galt the names of those who were not
turning to the outer world "We have jobs for all of them said
ulligan "In fact, there s only ten or twelve men who re going back
s year—mostly to finish off, convert whatever they own and
me here ...

"Yes" ... from the way things are going outside"

"Francisco" said Mulligan 'you ll come back in a few months?"
"In November at the latest said Francisco I ll send you word
short wave, when I m ready to come back—will you turn the
race on in my house?"
"I will" said Hugh Akston And I'll have your supper ready
you when you arrive
"John, I take it for granted" said Mulligan "that you re not
urning to New York this time"
Galt took a moment to glance at him then answered evenly "I
ve not decided it yet"
She noticed the shocked swiftness with which Francisco and
ulligan bent forward to stare at him—and the slowness with
ich Hugh Akston s glance moved to his face Akston did not
m to be astonished
'You re not thinking of going back to that hell for another year
you?" said Mulligan
I am"
But—good God John!—what for?"
I'll tell you when I ve decided"
But there s nothing left there for you to do We got everybody
knew of or can hope to know of Our list is completed except
Hank Rearden—and we ll get *him* before the year is over—and
s Taggart if she so chooses That s all Your job is done There s
ing to look for out there—except the final crash when the roof
ers down on their heads
I know it"
John, yours is the one head I don't want to be there when it
pens"
You've never had to worry about me"
But don t you realize what stage they re coming to? They re only
step away from open violence—hell they ve taken the step

sealed and declared it long ago!—but in one more moment they see the full reality of what they've taken, exploding in their damn faces—plain, open, blind, arbitrary, bloodshedding violence, runn amuck, hitting anything and anyone at random. That's what I don't want to see you in the midst of."

"I can take care of myself."

"John, there's no reason for you to take the risk," said Francisc

"What risk?"

"The looters are worried about the men who've disappear They're suspecting something You, of all people, shouldn't sta there any longer There's always a chance that they might discov just who and what you are"

"There's some chance Not much"

"But there's no reason whatever to take it There's nothing le that Ragnar and I can't finish"

Hugh Akston was watching them silently, leaning back in h chair, his face had that look of intensity, neither quite bitterne nor quite a smile, with which a man watches a progression th interests him, but that lags a few steps behind his vision

"If I go back," said Galt, "it won't be for our work It will b to win the only thing I want from the world for myself, now th the work is done I've taken nothing from the world and I'v wanted nothing But there's one thing which it's still holding an which is mine and which I won't let it have. No, I don't inten to break my oath, I won't deal with the looters, I won't be of an value or help to anyone out there, neither to looters nor neutrals— nor scabs If I go, it won't be for anyone's sake but mine—and don't think I'm risking my life, but if I am—well, I'm now free to risk it"

He was not looking at her, but she had to turn away and stand pressed against the window frame, because her hands were trembling

"But, John!" cried Mulligan, waving his arm at the valley, "if anything happens to you, what would we—" He stopped abruptly and guiltily

Galt chuckled "What were you about to say?" Mulligan waved his hand sheepishly, in a gesture of dismissal "Were you about to say that if anything happens to me, I'll die as the worst failure in the world?"

"All right," said Mulligan guiltily, "I won't say it I won't say that we couldn't get along without you—we can I won't beg you to stay here for our sake—I didn't think I'd ever revert to that rotten old plea, but, boy!—what a temptation it was, I can almost see why people do it I know that whatever it is you want, if you wish to risk your life, that's all there is to it—but I'm thinking only that it's oh God, John, it's such a valuable life!"

Galt smiled "I know it That's why I don't think I'm risking it—I think I'll win"

Francisco was now silent, he was watching Galt intently, with a frown of wonder, not as if he had found an answer, but as if he suddenly glimpsed a question

"Look, John," said Mulligan, "since you haven't decided whether
ɔ'll go—you haven't decided it yet, have you?"
"No not yet"
"Since you haven't, would you let me remind you of a few
ngs just for you to consider?"
"Go ahead"
"It's the chance dangers that I'm afraid of—the senseless, un
dictable dangers of a world falling apart Consider the physical
ks of complex machinery in the hands of blind fools and fear
zed cowards Just think of their railroads—you'd be taking a
ance on some such horror as that Winston tunnel incident every
ne you stepped aboard a train—and there will be more incidents
that kind, coming faster and faster They'll reach the stage
ere no day will pass without a major wreck"
"I know it."

very other industry, wher
which they thought could
k explosions, blast furnace
ons, subway cave ins and
ɪe very machines that had
a continuous peril

I know it.
"I know that you know it, but have you considered it in every
cific detail? Have you allowed yourself to visualize it? I want you
see the exact picture of what it is that you propose to enter—
ore you decide whether anything can justify your entering it You
ɔw that the cities will be hit worst of all The cities were made
the railroads and will go with them"
"That's right"
"When the rails are cut, the city of New York will starve in two
s That's all the supply of food it's got It's fed by a continent
ee thousand miles long How will they carry food to New York?
directive and oxcart? But first, before it happens, they'll go
ough the whole of the agony—through the shrinking the short
s, the hunger riots, the stampeding violence in the midst of the
wing stillness"
"They will"
"They'll lose their airplanes first, then their automobiles, then
ir trucks then their horsecarts"
"They will"
"Their factories will stop, then their furnaces and their radios
en their electric light system will go"
"It will"
"There's only a worn thread holding that continent together
ere will be one train a day, then one train a week—then the
ggart Bridge will collapse and—"
"No, it won't!
't was her voice and they whirled to her Her face was white,
t calmer than it had been when she had answered them last.
Slowly, Galt rose to his feet and inclined his head, as in
a verdict. "You have made your decision," he said

"I have"

"Dagny," said Hugh Akston, "I'm sorry." He spoke softly, wit fort, as if his words were struggling and failing to fill the si of the room 'I wish it were possible not to see this happen, I w have preferred anything—except to see you stay here by defau the courage of your convictions"

She spread her hands, palms out, her arms at her sides, gesture of simple frankness, and said, addressing them all, her ner so calm that she could afford to show emotion, "I want yo know this I have wished it were possible for me to die in one month, so that I could spend it in this valley This is how much wanted to remain But so long as I choose to go on living, I desert a battle which I think is mine to fight."

"Of course," said Mulligan respectfully, "if you still think i

'If you want to know the one reason that's taking me back tell you I cannot bring myself to abandon to destruction al greatness of the world, all that which was mine and yours, was made by us and is still ours by right—because I cannot b

of their minds So long as men desire to live, I cannot aust battle"

"Do they?' said Hugh Akston softly "Do they desire it? No, answer me now I know that the answer was the hardest thin any of us to grasp and to accept Just take that question back you, as the last premise left for you to check."

"You're leaving as our friend," said Midas Mulligan, "and be fighting everything you'll do, because we know you're w but it s not you that we'll be damning"

'You'll come back," said Hugh Akston, "because yours error of knowledge, not a moral failure, not an act of surr to evil, but only the last act of being victim to your own v We ll wait for you—and, Dagny, when you come back, yo have discovered that there need never be any conflict among desires, nor so tragic a clash of values as the one you've so well"

"Thank you," she said, closing her eyes

"We must discuss the conditions of your departure," said he spoke in the dispassionate manner of an executive 'First must give us your word that you will not disclose our sec any part of it—neither our cause nor our existence nor this nor your whereabouts for the past month—to anyone in the world, not at any time or for any purpose whatsoever"

"I give you my word"

'Second, you must never attempt to find this valley again are not to come here uninvited Should you break the first tion, it will not place us in serious danger Should you brea second—it will It is not our policy ever to be at the arb mercy of the good faith of another person, or at the mercy use that cannot be enforced Nor can we expect you to

nterests above your own Since you believe that your course
ht, the day may come when you may find it necessary to lead
nemies to this valley We shall therefore, leave you no means
it. You will be taken out of the valley by plane blindfolded,
you will be flown a distance sufficient to make it impossible
ou ever to retrace the course"
e inclined her head "You are right."
'our plane has been repaired Do you wish to reclaim it by
ng a draft on your account at the Mulligan Bank?"
lo"
Then we shall hold it, until such time as you choose to pay for
Day after tomorrow, I will take you in my plane to a point
de the valley and leave you within reach of further transpor-
n"

The trail back
o's cabin and
ares of lighted
lows hung scattered through the darkness, and the first streams
mist were weaving slowly across the panes like shadows cast
a distant sea They walked in silence but the sound of their
s, blending into a single, steady beat, was like a speech to be
sped and not to be uttered in any other form

After a while, Francisco said, 'It changes nothing it only makes
span a little longer, and the last stretch is always the hardest—
it's the last"
I will hope so," she said In a moment, she repeated quietly "The
is the hardest." She turned to Galt "May I make one request?'
'Yes"
Will you let me go tomorrow?"
If you wish"
When Francisco spoke again, moments later it was as if he were
dressing the unnamed wonder in her mind his voice had the
e of answering a question "Dagny, all three of us are in love"
she jerked her head to him—"with the same thing, no matter what
forms Don't wonder why you feel no breach among us You'll
one of us, so long as you'll remain in love with your rails and
ur engines—and they'll lead you back to us no matter how many
es you lose your way The only man never to be redeemed is
man without passion"
"Thank you," she said softly
"For what?"
"For . . . for the way you sound"
"How do I sound? Name it Dagny"
"You sound . . . as if you're happy"
"I am—in exactly the same way you are Don't tell me what you
to
ndure
She nodded silently, unable to name as joy any part of the
e felt, yet feeling that he was right.

Clots of mist were drifting like smoke across the moon and in the diffused glow she could not distinguish the expressions of the faces as she walked between them the only expressions to perceive were the straight silhouettes of their bodies the unbroken sound of their steps and her own feeling that she wished to walk on and on a feeling she could not define except that it was neither doubt nor pain

When they approached his cabin Francisco stopped the gesture of his hand embracing them both as he pointed to his door "Will you come in—since it s to be our last night together for some time? Let s have a drink to the future of which all three of us are certain

Are we? she asked

Yes said Galt "we are"

She looked at their faces when Francisco switched on the light in his house She could not define their expressions it was not happiness or any emotion pertaining to joy their faces were taut and solemn but it was a glowing solemnity—she thought—if this were possible and the odd glow she felt within her told her that her own face had the same look

Francisco reached for three glasses from a cupboard, but stopped as at a sudden thought He placed one glass on the table, then reached for the two silver goblets of Sebastián d Anconia and placed them beside it

"Are you going straight to New York Dagny? he asked in the calm unstrained tone of a host bringing out a bottle of old wine.

Yes she answered as calmly

I m flying to Buenos Aires day after tomorrow" he said, uncorking the bottle I m not sure whether I'll be back in New York later but if I am it will be dangerous for you to see me"

I won t care about that she said 'unless you feel that I m not entitled to see you any longer"

'True Dagny You re not Not in New York"

He was pouring the wine and he glanced up at Galt John, when will you decide whether you re going back or staying here?"

Galt looked straight at him then said slowly in the tone of a man who knows all the consequences of his words I *have* decided, Francisco I m going back

Francisco s hand stopped For a long moment he was seeing nothing but Galt s face Then his eyes moved to hers He put the bottle down and he d d not step back but it was as if his glance drew back to a wider range to include them both

"But of course" he said

He looked as if he had moved still farther and were now seeing the whole spread of the r years his voice had an even uninflected sound a quality that matched the size of the vision

I knew it twelve years ago he said I knew it before you could have known and it s I who should have seen that you would see That night when you called us to New York I thought of it then as"—he was speaking to Galt but his eyes moved to Dagny "as everything that you were seeking everything you told

is to live for or die, if necessary I should have seen that you would think it, too. It could not have been otherwise It is as it had —and ought—to be. It was set then, twelve years ago " He looked at Galt and chuckled softly "And you say that it's *I* who've taken the hardest beating?"

He turned with too swift a movement—then, too slowly, as if in deliberate emphasis, he completed the task of pouring the wine, filling the three vessels on the table He picked up the two silver goblets, looked down at them for the pause of an instant, then [illegible]

But I have not earned it—and what you've paid, I m paying it now, and I don't know whether I'll ever earn enough to hold clear title, but if hell is the price—and the measure—then let me be the greediest of the three of us."

As they drank, as she stood, her eyes closed, feeling the liquid motion of the wine inside her throat, she knew that for all three of them this was the most tortured—and the most exultant—moment they had ever reached

She did not speak to Galt, as they walked down the last stretch of the trail to his house She did not turn her head to him, feeling that even a glance would be too dangerous She felt, in their silence both the calm of a total understanding and the tension of the knowledge that they were not to name the things they understood.

But she faced him, when they were in his living room, with full confidence and as if in sudden certainty of a right—the certainty that she would not break and that it was now safe to speak. She said evenly neither as plea nor as triumph, merely as the statement of a fact, "You are going back to the outer world because I will be there "

"Yes "

"I do not want you to go "

"You have no choice about it."

"You are going for my sake "

"*No* for mine "

"Will you allow me to see you there?"

"No "

"I am not to see you?"

"No "

"I am not to know where you are or what you do?"

"You re not."

"Will you be watching me, as you did before?"

"More so "

"Is your purpose to protect me?"

"No "

"What is it, then?"

"To be there on the day when you decide to join us "

She looked at him attentively, permitting herself no other action but as if groping for an answer to the first point she h not fully understood

'All the rest of us will be gone," he explained "It will been too dangerous to remain I will remain as your last key, before t door of this valley closes altogether "

"Oh' She choked it off before it became a moan. Then, gaining the manner of impersonal detachment, she asked, "Su pose I were to tell you that my decision is final and that I am ne to join you?'

It would be a lie "

'Suppose I were now to decide that I wish to make it final a to stand by it no matter what the future?"

'No matter what future evidence you observe and what co victions you form?'

"Yes "

"That would be worse than a lie "

"You are certain that I have made the wrong decision?"

"I am "

"Do you believe that one must be responsible for one's own rors?

"I do "

"Then why aren t you letting me bear the consequences of mine

"I am and you will "

"If I find when it is too late that I want to return to this val —why should you have to bear the risk of keeping that door op to me?"

I don't have to I wouldn t do it if I had no selfish end to gai

"What selfish end?'

"I want you here "

She closed her eyes and inclined her head in open admission defeat—defeat in the argument and in her attempt to face calm the full meaning of that which she was leaving

Then she raised her head and, as if she had absorbed his ki of frankness, she looked at him hiding neither her suffering n her longing nor her calm, knowing that all three were in t glance

His face was as it had been in the sunlight of the moment wh she had seen it for the first time a face of merciless seren and unflinching perceptiveness, without pain or fear or guilt. S thought that were it possible for her to stand looking at him, the straight lines of his eyebrows over the dark green eyes the curve of the shadow underscoring the shape of his mout at the poured metal planes of his skin in the open collar of h shirt and the casually immovable posture of his legs—she wou wish to spend the rest of her life on this spot and in this manner A in the next instant she knew that if her wish were granted, th contemplation would lose all meaning, because she would ha rayed all the things that gave it val

Then, not as memory, but as an experience of the present, she elt herself reliving the moment when she had stood at the window f her room in New York, looking at a fogbound city, at the un ttainable shape of Atlantis sinking out of reach—and she knew at she was now seeing the answer to that moment She felt, not e words she had then addressed to the city, but that untranslated ensation from which the words had come You, whom I have ways loved and never found, you whom I expected to see at the d of the rails beyond the horizon—

Aloud, she said, "I want you to know this I started my life with single absolute that the world was mine to shape in the image of y highest values and never to be given up to a lesser standard, matter how long or hard the s

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le

minuess evu"—my love and my hope to reach you and my wish be worthy of you on the day when I would stand before you ce to face—"I am going back to fight for this valley—to release from its underground, to regain for it its full and rightful realm, let the earth belong to you in fact, as it does in spirit—and to et you again on the day when I'm able to deliver to you the ole of the world—or, if I fail, to remain in exile from this valley the end of my life"—but what is left of my life will still be urs, and I will go on in your name, even though it is a name never to pronounce, I will go on serving you, even though I'm er to win, I will go on, to be worthy of you on the day when I uld have met you, even though I won't—"I will fight for it, n if I have to fight against you, even if you damn me as a itor . . . even if I am never to see you again"

He had stood without moving, he had listened with no change his face, only his eyes had looked at her as if he were hearing ry word even the words she had not pronounced He answered, h the same look, as if the look were holding some circuit not to be broken, his voice catching some tone of hers, as if in nal of the same code, a voice with no sign of emotion except in spacing of the words

If you fail, as men have failed in their quest for a vision that uld have been possible, yet has remained forever beyond their ch—if, like them, you come to think that one's highest values not to be attained and one's greatest vision is not to be made —don't damn this earth, as they did, don't damn existence have seen the Atlantis they were seeking, it is here, it exists— one must enter it naked and alone, with no rags from the thoods of centuries, with the purest clarity of mind—not an ent heart, but that which is much rarer an intransigent s one's only possession and key. You will not enter it learn that you do not need to convince or to conq ld. When you learn it, you will see that through all

of your struggle, nothing had barred you from Atlantis and the
were no chains to hold
wear Through all those
was waiting for you"—h
the unspoken words in her mind—"waiting as unremittingly as yo
were fighting as passionately, as desperately—but with a great
certainty than yours Go out to continue your struggle. Go o
carrying unchosen burdens, taking undeserved punishment and b
lieving that justice can be served by the offer of your own spi
to the most unjust of tortures But in your worst and darke
moments remember that you have seen another kind of worl
Remember that you can reach it whenever you choose to se
Remember that it will be waiting and that it's real, it's possible
it s yours"

Then, turning his head a little, his voice as clear, but his ey
breaking the circuit he asked, "What time do you wish to lea
tomorrow?"

'Oh ' As early as it will be convenient for you"

"Then have breakfast ready at seven and we'll take off at eight

I will '

He reached into his pocket and extended to her a small, shin
disk which she could not distinguish at first He dropped it on t
palm of her hand it was a five-dollar gold piece

"The last of your wages for the month," he said

Her fingers snapped closed over the coin too tightly, but s
answered calmly and tonelessly, "Thank you"

"Good night, Miss Taggart"

"Good night '

She did not sleep in the hours that were still left to her She s
on the floor of her room, her face pressed to the bed, feeli
nothing but the sense of his presence beyond the wall At times, s
felt as if he were before her, as if she were sitting at his feet. S
spent her last night with him in this manner.

* *

She left the valley as she had come, carrying away nothing th
belonged to it She left the few possessions she had acquired—b
peasant skirt, a blouse, an apron, a few pieces of underwear
folded neatly in a drawer of the chest in her room She looked
them for a moment befo- [illegible] king that
to
ta

[illegible] her [illegible]

The sun touched the peaks of the mountains, drawing a shini
circle as a frontier of the valley—when she climbed aboard t
plane She leaned back in the seat beside him and looked at Gal
face bent over her, as it had been bent when she had opened h
eyes on the first morning Then she closed her eyes and felt h
hands tying the blindfold across her face

She heard the blast of the motor, not as sound, but as the sho
of an explosion inside her body, only it felt like a dista

ıdder, as ıf the person feelıng ıt would have been hurt ıf she were
so far away

She did not know when the wheels left the ground or when the ne crossed the circle of the peaks She lay still, with the pound beat of the motor as her only perception of space, as ıf she re carried inside a current of sound that rocked once in a while sound came from his engine, from the control of his hands the wheel, she held onto that, the rest was to be endured, not isted

She lay still, her legs stretched forward her hands on the arms the seat, with no sense of motion, not even her own, to give her sense of time, with no space, no sight, no future with the night closed eyelids under the pressure of the cloth—and with the owledge of his presence beside her as her single, unchanging lity

They did not speak. Once, she said suddenly, "Mr Galt."

"Yes?"

"No Nothing I just wanted to know whether you were still ere"

"I will always be there"

She did not know for how many miles the memory of the und of words seemed like a small landmark rolling away into distance, then vanishing Then there was nothing but the still ss of an indivisible present

She did not know whether a day had passed or an hour, when e felt the downward, plunging motion which meant that they re about to land or to crash, the two possibilities seemed equal her mind

She felt the jolt of the wheels against the ground as an oddly layed sensation as if some fraction of time had gone to make r believe it.

She felt the running streak of jerky motion, then the jar of the op and of silence, then the touch of his hands on her hair, remov g the blindfold

She saw a glaring sunlight, a stretch of scorched weeds going t into the sky, with no mountains to stop it, a deserted highway d the hazy outline of a town about a mile away She glanced at r watch forty-seven minutes ago, she had still been in the alley

"You'll find a Taggart station there," he said pointing at the wn, "and you'll be able to take a train."

She nodded, as if she understood

He did not follow her as she descended to the ground He leaned cross the wheel toward the open door of the plane and they looked t each other She stood, her face raised to him, a faint wind irring her hair, the straight line of her shoulders sculptured by e trim suit of a business executive amidst the flat immensity of mpty prairie

The movement of his hand pointed east, toward some ities. "Don't look for me out there," he said "You will

me—until you want me for what I am And when you'll want m
I ll be the easiest man to find "

She heard the sound of the door falling closed upon him it seems louder than the blast of the propeller that followed She watch the run of the plane s wheels and the trail of weeds left flatte behind them Then she saw a strip of sky between wheels a weeds

She looked around her A reddish haze of heat hung over t shapes of the town in the distance and the shapes seemed to s under a rusty tinge above their roofs she saw the remnant of crumbled smokestack She saw a dry yellow scrap rustling fain in the weeds beside her it was a piece of newspaper She look at these objects blankly unable to make them real

She raised her eyes to the plane She watched the spread of wings grow smaller in the sky draining away in its wake the sou of its motor It kept rising wings first like a long silver cro then the curve of its motion went following the sky droppi slowly closer to the earth then it seemed not to move any long but only to shrink She watched it like a star in the process extinction while it shrank from cross to dot to a burning sp which she was no longer certain of seeing When she saw th spread of the sky was strewn with such sparks all over she kn that the plane was gone

Chapter III ANTI GREED

What am I doing here? asked Dr Robert Stadler "Why wa asked to come here? I demand an explanation I m not accusto to being dragged halfway across a continent without rhyme rea or notice

Dr Floyd Ferris smiled Which makes me appreciate it all the more that you *d d* come Dr Stadler " It was impossible to tell whether his voice had a tone of gratitude—or of gloating

The sun was beating down upon them and Dr Stadler felt a streak of [illegible]

three days It occurred to him that that was precisely the reason why his meeting with Dr Ferris had been delayed to this moment, but he brushed the thought aside just as he brushed some insect buzzing to reach his wet temple

"Why was I unable to get in touch with you?" he asked. The fraudulent weapon of sarcasm now seemed to sound less effective than ever but it was Dr Stadler s only weapon Why d d you find it necessary to send me messages on official stationery worded in a style proper I m sure for Army —orders he was about to say but d dn t—"communications but certainly not for scientific correspondence?

"It is a *government* matter " said Dr Ferris gently

"Do you realize that I was much too busy and that this meant an interruption of my work?"

"Oh yes," said Dr Ferris noncommittally

"Do you realize that I could have refused to come?'

"But you didn t," said Dr Ferris softly

"Why was I given no explanation? Why didn t you come for me in person, instead of sending those incredible young hooligans with their mysterious gibberish that sounded half science, half pulp-magazine?"

"I was too busy," said Dr Ferris blandly

"Then would you mind telling me what you re doing in the middle of a plain in Iowa—and what I m doing here, for that matter?" He waved contemptuously at the dusty horizon of an empty prairie and at the the three wooden grandstands The stands were newly erected and the wood, too, seemed to perspire, he could see drops of resin sparkling in the sun

"We are about to witness an historical event, Dr Stadler An occasion which will become a milestone on the road of science, civilization, social welfare and political adaptability" Dr Ferris' voice had the tone of a public relations man s memorized handout "The turning point of a new era"

"What event? What new era?'

"As you will observe, only the most distinguished citizens the cream of our intellectual elite, have been chosen for the special privilege of witnessing this occasion We could not omit your name, could we?—and we feel certain, of course, that we can count on your loyalty and cooperation"

He could not catch Dr Ferris' eyes The grandstands were rapidly filling with people, and Dr Ferris kept interrupting himself constantly to wave to nondescript newcomers whom Dr Stadler had never seen before, but who were personages as he could tell by the particular shade of gaily informal deference in Ferris' waving They all seemed to know Dr Ferris and to seek him out, as if he were the master of ceremonies—or the star—of the occasion

"If you would kindly be specific for a moment," said Dr Stadler "and tell me what—"

"Hi, Spud!" called Dr Ferris waving to a portly white haired man who filled the full-dress uniform of a general

Dr Stadler raised his voice "I said, if you would kindly concentrate long enough to explain to me what in hell is going on—"

"But it s very simple It's the final triumph of You'll have to excuse me a minute, Dr Stadler," said Dr Ferris hastily, tearing forward, like an overtrained lackey at the sound of a bell in the direction of what looked like a group of aging rowdies he turned back long enough to add two words which he seemed reverently to consider as a full explanation '*The press!*'

Dr Stadler sat down on the wooden bench feeling unaccountably reluctant to brush against anything around him The three stands were spaced at intervals in a semi-curve like the tiers of a small private circus with room for some three hundred they seemed built for the viewing of some spectacle—but

the emptiness of a flat prairie stretching off to the horizon, wi
nothing in sight but the dark blotch of a farmhouse miles away

There were radio microphones in front of one stand whi
seemed reserved for the press There was a contraption resembl
a portable switchboard in front of the stand reserved for officia
a few levers of polished metal sparkled in the sun on the face o
the switchboard In an improvised parking lot behind the stand
the glitter

But it was
away that
small squ
walls no
and a large dome grotesquely too heavy for the rest ...
to press the structure down into the soil A few outlets protrude
from the base of the dome in loose irregular shapes resembli
badly poured clay funnels they did not seem to belong to a
industrial age or to any known usage The building had an a
of silent malevolence like a puffed venomous mushroom it wa
obviously modern but its sloppy rounded, ineptly unspecific lin
made it look like a primitive structure unearthed in the heart o
the jungle devoted to some secret rites of savagery

Dr Stadler sighed with irritation he was tired of secrets "Co
fidential and 'Top Confidential had been the words stamped o
the invitation which had demanded that he travel to Iowa on a tw
day notice and for an unspecified purpose Two young men, wh
called themselves physicists had appeared at the Institute t
escort him his calls to Ferris office in Washington had remaine
unanswered The young men had talked—through an exhaustin
trip by government plane then a clammy ride in a governmen
car—about science emergencies social equilibriums and the nee
of secrecy till he knew less than he had known at the start h
noticed only that two words kept recurring in their jabber, whic
had also appeared in the text of the invitation two words tha
had an ominous sound when involving an unknown issue the de
mands for his loyalty and co operation

The young men had deposited him on a bench in the front row
of the grandstand and had vanished like the folding gear of a
mechanism leaving him to the sudden presence of Dr Ferris
in person Now watching the scene around him watching Dr
Ferris vague excited loosely casual gestures in the midst of a
group of newsmen he had an impression of bewildering confusion
of senseless chaotic inefficiency—and of a smooth machine working
to produce the exact degree of that impression needed at the exact
moment

He felt a single sudden flash of panic, in which as in a flash
of lightning he permitted himself to know that he felt a desperate
desire to escape But he slammed his mind shut against it He
knew that the darkest secret of the occasion—more crucial more
untouchable more deadly than whatever was hidden in the mush
room building—was that which had made him agree to come

He would never have to learn his own motive, he thought he

ght it, not by means of words, but by means of the brief, us spasm of an emotion that resembled irritation and felt like . The words that stood in his mind, as they had stood when had agreed to come were like a voodoo formula which one es when it is needed and beyond which one must not look *t can you do when you have to deal with people?*

e noticed that the stand reserved for those whom Ferris had d the intellectual elite was larger than the stand prepared for rnment officials He caught himself feeling a swift little sneak leasure at the thought that he had been placed in the front . He turned to glance at the tiers behind him The sensation he rienced was like a small, gray shock that random, faded, worn assembly was not his conception of an intellectual : He saw defensively belligerent men and tastelessly dressed nen—he saw mean, rancorous, suspicious faces that bore the mark incompatible with a standard bearer of the intellect mark of uncertainty. He could find no face he knew no face ecognize as famous and none likely ever to achieve such recog on. He wondered by what standard these people had been cted.

hen he noticed a gangling figure in the second row, the figure an elderly man with a long, slack face that seemed faintly iliar to him, though he could recall nothing about it, except ague memory, as of a photograph seen in some unsavory lication. He leaned toward a woman and asked, pointing, uld you tell me the name of that gentleman?" The woman an

... of a tourist guide, and declaring, when they ... ugh to be heard, "But why should you waste your time on me, en *there* is the source of today's achievement, the man who de it all possible—Dr. Robert Stadler!"

t seemed to him for an instant that he saw an incongruous look the worn, cynical faces of the newsmen, a look that was not le respect, expectation or hope, but more like an echo of these, a faint reflection of the look they might have worn in their th on hearing the name of Robert Stadler In that instant, he felt impulse which he would not acknowledge the impulse to tell m that he knew nothing about today's event, that his power nted for less th... he had been brought here as a pawn

... ning, ... hest ... ord ... of

y private interests or personal greed, it is devoted to the welfare of nkind, to the good of humanity as a whole—" spouting, aphone, the sickening generalities he had heard from Dr. F

He would not permit himself to know that what he felt was s loathing, he identified the emotion, but not its object; it was loath for the men around him, he thought; it was they who were forc him to go through this shameful performance What can you d he thought—when you have to deal with people?

The newsmen were mak ... The r now had the ... ing that they ... automaton

"Dr Stadler," asked one of them, pointing at the building on knoll 'is it true that you consider Project X the greatest achievem of the State Science Institute?"

There was a dead drop of silence

"Project X?" said Dr Stadler

He knew that something was ominously wrong in the tone of voice because he saw the heads of the newsmen go up as at sound of an alarm he saw them waiting their pencils poised.

For one instant, while he felt the muscles of his face cracking the fraud of a smile, he felt a formless, an almost supernatu terror, as if he sensed again the silent working of some smoo machine, as if he were caught in it, part of it and doing its revocable will "Project X?" he said softly, in the mysterious to of a conspirator 'Well, gentlemen, the value—and the motive— any achievement of the State Science Institute are not to doubted, since it is a non profit venture—need I say more?"

... wonder ... ow seem ... less tense—and more impertinent.

... lot ... des ... the

Dr Stadler turned to Ferris "*What* is Project X?" he ask sternly

Dr Ferris smiled in a manner of innocence and insolence togethe "A non profit venture," he answered—and went running off to me the newcomers.

From the respectful whispers of the crowd, Dr Stadler learne that the little man ... physic

... group came closer and he saw Ferris steering them in h direction. "Mr Thompson" ... as they ap proached, ...

Dr. Stadl ... frac tion of a s ... as the sight of a phenomenon from a mystical realm forever incom prehensible to Mr. Thompson—and they had the piercing, calcula

un that nothing is
isual equivalent of

aid Mr Thompson

with a crew hair-
the names of the
ceeded toward the
ng sensation of a
discovery he dared not face the discovery that he had felt anxiously
pleased by the little shyster's nod of approval

A party of young attendants, who looked like movie theater ushers, appeared from somewhere with handcarts of glittering objects, which they proceeded to distribute to the assembly The objects were field glasses Dr Ferris took his place at the microphone of a public-address system by the officials stand At a signal from Wesley Mouch, his voice boomed suddenly over the prairie an unctuous, fraudulently solemn voice magnified by the microphone inventor's ingenuity into the sound and power of a giant

"Ladies and gentlemen . . !"

[illegible]

[illegible] moment it has been known only to a very few and only as Project X."

Dr Stadler [illegible] g in sight—

which had
sky showed
lass framed
[illegible] blankness of empty windows He saw a sagging barn the rusted tower of a water wheel, and the remnant of a tractor lying upturned with its treads in the air

Dr Ferris was talking about the crusaders of science and about the years of [illegible] persevering research

the farm—
desolation
[illegible] six or seven of them some drowsing [illegible] e munching lethargically at whatever grass they could find among the sun scorched weeds

"Project X," Dr Ferris was saying, "was devoted to some special research in the [illegible] has astonishing [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] nothing, leading

[illegible]

at intervals into the ground

And it was discovered," said Dr Ferris, "that there are certain frequencies of sound vibration which no structure, organic or inorganic, can withstand . . ."

Dr Stadler noticed a silvery spot bouncing over the weeds among the herd It was a kid that had not been chained, it kept leaping and weaving about its mother.

" The sound ray is controlled by a panel inside the great underground laboratory," said Dr Ferris, pointing at the building on the knoll That panel is known to us affectionately as the 'Xylophone —because one must be darn careful to strike the right keys, or, rather, to pull the right levers For this special occasion, an extension Xylophone, connected to the one inside, has been erected here '—he pointed to the switchboard in front of the officials' stand—'so that you may witness the entire operation and see the simplicity of the whole procedure. . . ."

Dr Stadler found pleasure in watching the kid, a soothing reassuring kind of pleasure The little creature seemed barely a week old, it looked like a ball of white fur with graceful long legs, it kept bounding in a manner of deliberate, gaily ferocious awkwardness, all four of its legs held stiff and straight It seemed to be leaping at the sunrays, at the summer air, at the joy of discovering its own existence

". . The sound [illegible] controllable in re[illegible]
you [illegible]
two [illegible]
beyo[illegible]
able [illegible] producing rays to cover—through the outlets which you may observe under the dome—the entire countryside within a radius of a hundred miles, a circle with a periphery extending from the shore of the Mississippi, roughly from the bridge of the Taggart Transcontinental Railroad, to Des Moines and Fort Dodge, Iowa, to Austin, Minnesota, to Woodman, W[illegible] to Rock Island Illinois. This is only a modest [illegible]
edge to build generat[illegible]
miles—but due to the [illegible]
suffic[illegible]

[illegible]

nyster had had as little to do with the Project as any of the movie usher attendants that he possessed neither the mind nor the initia ve nor even the sufficient degree of malice to cause a new gopher rap to be brought into the world, that he too was only the pawn of silent machine—a machine that had no center no leader no direc

he pawns each to the degree of his evil Dr Stadler gripped the edge of the bench he felt a desire to leap to his feet and run

As to the function and the purpose of the sound ray I shall ay nothing I shall let it speak for itself You will now see it work When Dr Blodgett pulls the levers of the Xylophone I suggest that you keep your eyes on the target—which is that farmhouse two miles away There will be nothing else to see The ray itself is in visible It has long been conceded by all progressive thinkers that there are no entities only actions—and no values only conse quences Now ladies and gentlemen you will see the action and the consequences of the Thompson Harmonizer

microphone and dler the switchboard son Mr Thomp f something had r and whispered npson loudly

could not bear to watch the gra eful undulating effeminate motion of Dr Blodgetts hand as it pulled the first lever of the switchboard then the next He raised his field glasses and looked at

s pulling at its ext instant the ward and jerk in convulsions

B the time Dr Stadler believed it the pile was motionless except for one beasts leg sticking out of the mass stiff as a rod and shaking as in a strong wind The farmhouse tore into strips of clapboard and went down followed by a geyser of the bricks of its chimney The tractor vanished into a pancake The water tower cracked and its shreds hit the ground while its wheel was still describing a long curve through the air as if of its own leisurely volition The steel beams and girders of the solid new trestle collapsed like a structure of matchst

tested, s
was not
nightma
single

He moved He was looking at
step the dista
exce loud

A single, high, thin scream rose from the tiers behind him as some woman fainted He wondered why she should scream so long after the fact—and then he realized that the time elapsed since the touch of the first lever was not a full minute

He raised his field glasses again, almost as if he were suddenly hoping that the cloud shadow would be all he would see But the material objects were still there, they were a mount of refuse. He moved his glasses over the wreckage, in a moment, he realized that he was looking for the kid He could not find it, there was nothing but a pile of gray fur

When he lowered the glasses and turned, he found Dr Ferris looking at him He felt certain that through the whole of the test, it was not the target, it was his face that Ferris had watched, as if to see whether he Robert Stadler, could withstand the ray

"That's all there is to it,' the fattish Dr Blodgett announced through the microphone, in the ingratiating sales tone of a department store floorwalker "There is no nail or rivet remaining in the frame of the structures and there is no blood vessel left unbroken in the bodies of the animals"

The crowd was rustling with jerky movements and high pitched whispers People were looking at one another, rising uncertainly and dropping down again, restlessly demanding anything but the pause There was a sound of submerged hysteria in the whispers. They seemed to be waiting to be told what to think

Dr Stadler saw a woman being escorted down the steps from the back row, her head bent, a handkerchief pressed to her mouth she was sick at her stomach

He turned away and saw that Dr Ferris was still watching him Dr Stadler leaned back a little, his face austere and scornful, the face of the nation's greatest scientist, and asked, "Who invented that ghastly thing?"

"You did"

Dr Stadler looked at him, not moving

"It is merely a practical appliance," said Dr Ferris pleasantly, "based upon your theoretical discoveries It was derived from your invaluable research into the nature of cosmic rays and of the spatial transmission of energy"

"Who worked on the Project?"

"A few third raters, as you would call them Really, there was very little difficulty None of them could have begun to conceive of the first step toward the concept of your energy transmission formula, but given that—the rest was easy"

"What is the practical purpose of this invention? What are the [illegible]

[illegible]

It will set the country free from the fear of aggression and permit it to plan its future in undisturbed safety" His voice had an odd carelessness, a tone of offhand improvisation, as if he were neither expecting nor attempting to be believed "It will relieve social fric-

s It will promote peace stability and—as we have indicated—nony It will eliminate all danger of war

What war? What aggression? With the whole world starving all those People s States barely subsisting on handouts from country—where do you see any danger of war? Do you expect se ragged savages to attack you?

Dr Ferris looked straight into his eyes "Internal enemies can as great a danger to the people as external ones he answered rhaps greater This time his voice sounded as if he expected l was certain to be understood "Social systems are so precarious think of what stability could be achieved by a few scientific allations at strategic key points It would guarantee a state perm

icked past

n to look

sees that

he had known had known from the first had spent years

d in a contest between the

"I don t know what you re

man or greedy industrialist

d softly in the tone of an

have afforded it It s an

ous investment with no prospect of material gain What profit uld he expect from it? There are no profits henceforth to be rived from that farm He pointed at the dark strip in the distance. but, as you have so well observed Project X had to be a non ofit venture Contrary to a business firm the State Science Insti te had no trouble in obtaining funds for the Project You have ot heard of the Institute having any financial difficulties in the past o years have you? And it used to be such a problem—getting em to vote the funds necessary for the advancement of science hey always demanded gadgets for their cash as you used to say Well here was a gadget which some people in power could fully ppreciate. They got the others to vote for it It wasn t difficult In act a great many of those others felt safe in voting money for a roject that was secret—they felt certain it was important since ney were not considered important enough to be let in on it There were of course a few skeptics and doubters But they gave in when hey were reminded that the head of the State Science Institute was Dr Robert Stadler—whose judgment and integrity they could not doubt."

Dr Stadler was looking down at his fingernails

The sudden screech of the microphone jerked the crowd into an instantaneous attentiveness people seemed to be a second s worth of self-control away from panic An announcer with a voice like a machine gun spitting smiles barked cheerily that they were now to witness the radio broadcast that would break the news of th great discovery to the whole nation. Then with a glance at watch, his script and the signaling arm of Wesley Mouch he into the sparkling snake head of the microphone—into

rooms the offices, the studies, the nurseries of the country "Lad and gen [illegible]

project in the country at this precarious time, then added [illegible] accidentally, as a semi-joke, "that there be no criticism of anyth[illegible] at any time"

"—and the nations political, cultural, intellectual and mo[illegible] leaders," the announcer was yelling into the microphone, "who ha[illegible] witnessed this great event as your representatives and in yo[illegible] name, will now tell you their views of it in person!"

Mr Thompson was the first to mount the wooden steps to t[illegible] platform of the microphone He snapped his way through a bri[illegible] speech hailing a new era and declaring—in the belligerent to[illegible] of a challenge to unidentified enemies—that science belonged to t[illegible] people and that every man on the face of the globe had a right to share of the advantages created by technological progress

Wesley Mouch came next. He spoke about social planning an[illegible] the necessity of unanimous rallying in support of the planners H[illegible] spoke about discipline, unity, austerity and the patriotic duty [illegible] bearing temporary hardships "We have mobilized the best brains [illegible] the country to work for your welfare This great invention was th[illegible] product of the genius of [illegible] of h[illegible] manity is not to be [illegible] greatest mind of the [illegible]

"*What?*" gasped I[illegible]

Dr Ferris looked [illegible]

"He didn't ask n[illegible] snapped half whispered

Dr Ferris spread out his hands in a gesture of reproachful help lessness "Now you see, Dr Stadler [illegible] if you allow yourself to [illegible] always considerec[illegible] see it is not Mr [illegible]

The figure now slouching against the sky on the speakers' plat form, coiling itself about the microphone, talking in the bored, contemptuous tone of an off-color story, was Dr Simon Pritchett. He was declaring that the new invention was an instrument of social welfare which guaranteed general prosperity, and that anyone who doubted this self-evident fact was an enemy of society, to be treated accordingly "This invention, the product of Dr Robert Stadler, the pre-eminent lover of freedom—"

Dr Ferris opened a briefcase, produced some pages of neatly typed [illegible] of the [illegible] the hour [illegible] His eyes [illegible] een accu[illegible]

Dr Stadler took the pages, but held them [illegible] of

o straight fingers as one might hold a scrap of waste paper about be tossed aside "I haven t asked you to appoint yourself as my ost writer" he said. The sarcasm of the voice gave Ferris his e this was not a moment for sarcasm

"I couldn't have allowed your invaluable time to be taken up by e writing of radio speeches," said Dr Ferris "I felt certain that u would appreciate it." He said it in a tone of spurious politeness tended to be recognized as spurious, the tone of tossing to a ggar the alms of face-saving

Dr Stadler's answer disturbed him· Dr Stadler did not choose to swer or to glance down at the manuscript.

"Lack of faith," a beefy speaker was snarling on the platform, in e tone of a street brawl, "lack of faith is the only thing we got fear! If we have faith in the plans of our leaders why, the plans ll work and we'll all have prosperity and ease and plenty It s the llows who go around doubting and destroying our morale, it s they ho re keeping us in shortages and misery But we re not going to t them do it much longer, we're here to protect the people—and if y of those doubting smarties come around, believe you me, we'll ke care of them!"

"It would be unfortunate," said Dr Ferris in a soft voice, "to

uone, "this invention is a great, new instrument of peace. It will rotect us from the aggressive designs of selfish enemies it will llow us to breathe freely and to learn to love our fellow men." he had a bony face

...utsis of science and love!"

Dr Stadler looked at the faces in the grandstands They were itting quietly now, they were listening but their eyes had an ebbing ook of twilight, a look of fear in the process of being accepted as ermanent, the look of raw wounds being dimmed by the veil of nfection. They knew, as he knew it, that *they* were the targets of the shapeless funnels protruding from the mushroom building s dome—and he wondered in what manner they were now extinguishing their minds and escaping that knowledge he knew that the words they were eager to absorb and believe were the chains slipping in to hold them, like the goats, securely within the range of those funnels They were eager to believe he saw the tightening lines of their lips he saw the occasional glances of suspicion they threw at their neighbors—as if the horror that threatened them not the sound ray, but the men who would make them acknow it as horror Their eyes were veiling over, but the remnant a wound was a cry for help.

"Why do you think they think?" said Dr Ferris softly. "Reas is the scientist's only weapon—and reason has no power over me has it? At a time like ours, with the country falling apart, with a mob driven by blind desperation to the edge of open riots a violence—order must be maintained by any means available. Wha can we do when we have to deal with people?"

Dr Stadler did not answer

A fat, jellied woman, with an inadequate brassière under a dark perspiration stained dress, was saying into the microphone—Dr Stadler could not believe it at first—that the new invention was to b greeted with p ... thers of the country

Dr Stadler

but the noble

ness at the co

Suddenly, w

face him It v

wound that h

pain, in horror, in sincerity, as if, for that moment, both he a Ferris were human beings, while he moaned with incredulous des pair

"In a civilized century, Ferris, in a civilized century!"

Dr Ferris took his time to produce and prolong a soft chuckle "I dont know what you re talking about," he answered in the tone of a quotation

Dr Stadler lowered his eyes.

When Ferris spoke again, his voice had the faintest edge of a tone which Stadler could not define, except that it did not belong in any civilized discussion "It would be unfortunate if anything were to happen to jeopardize the State Science Institute It would be most unfortunate if the Institute were to be closed—or if any one of us were to be forced to leave it Where would we go? Scientists are an inordinate luxury these days—and there arent many people or establishments left who re able to afford necessities, let alone luxuries There are no doors left open to us We wouldn't be wel come in the research department of an industrial concern, such as —let us say—Rearden Steel. Besides, if we should happen to make enemies, the same enemies would be feared by any person tempted to employ our talents A man like Rearden would have fought for us Would a man like Orren Boyle? But this is purely theoretical ... private estab

anachron ... set up

in our s

tinued

Pritchet

able or

ealists—have you?—and this is no age for impractical idealism anyone wished to oppose a government policy how would he ake himself heard? Through these gentlemen of the press Dr adler? Through this microphone? Is there an independent news

Dr Stadler's lips moved stiffly, as stiffly as the muscles of the ats. "You are speaking to Robert Stadler"
"I have not fo

the eyes of people such as you see around you? If they will lieve when so told that an instrument of death is a tool of pros nty—would they not believe it if they were told that Robert

one. You're the next speaker"
Looking off at the dark strip of the farm in the distance Dr adler knew that what he felt was terror but he would not permit nself to know its nature He, who had been able to study the rticles and subparticles of cosmic space would not permit him f to examine his feeling and to know that it was made of ee parts one part was terror of a vision that seemed to stand fore his eyes the vision of the inscription cut, in his honor, over door of the Institute "To the fearless mind to the inviolate th"—another part was plain brute, animal fear of physical struction ... the ... lized world of his
and the third was
first one delivers

eps firm and slow
ld crumpled in his
, it looked like a walk to mount either a pedestal or a guillo As the whole of a man's life flashes before him in his dying ment, so he walked to the sound of the announcer's voice read to the country the list of Robert Stadler's achievements and eer A faint convulsion ran over Robert Stadler's face at the rds "—former head of the Department of Physics of the *Patrick* ury *University* He knew, distantly, not as if the knowledge were hin him, but as if it were within some person he was leaving be d, that the crowd was about to witness an act of destruct re *terrible* than the destruction of the farm.
He had mounted the first three steps of the scaffold, ing newsman ran to him and, from below,

the railing to stop him Dr Stadler!" he cried in a desperate whis
per "Tell them the truth! Tell them that you had nothing to d
with it! Tell them what sort of infernal machine it is and for wha
purpose it s intended to be used! Tell the country what sort o
people are trying to rule it! Nobody can doubt your word! Te
them the truth Save us! You re the only one who can!"

Dr Stadler looked down at him He was young his moveme
and voice had that swift sharp clarity which belongs to comp
tence among his aged corrupt favor ridden and pull-crea ed co
leagues he had managed to achieve the rank of elite of the politic
press by means and in the role of a last irresistible spark of abilit
His eyes had the look of an eager, unfrightened intelligence th
were the kind of eyes Dr Stadler had seen looking up at him fro
the benches of classrooms He noticed that this boy s eyes we
hazel they had a tinge of green.

Dr Stadler turned his head and saw that Ferris had come ru
ing to his side like a servant or a jailer I do not expect to
insulted by disloyal young punks with treasonable motives," sa
Dr Stadler loudly

Dr Ferris whirled upon the young man and snapped his face o
of control distorted by rage at the unexpected and unplanne
Give me your press card and your work permit!"

I am proud Dr Robert Stadler read into the microphone a
into the attentive silence of a nation "that my years of work in t
service of science have brought me the honor of placing into t
hands of our great leader Mr Thompson a new instrument w
an incalculable potential for a civilizing and liberating influe
upon the mind of man "

* *

The sky had the stagnant breath of a furnace and the streets
New York were like pipes running not with air and light but w
melted dust Dagny stood on a street corner where the airport
had left her looking at the city in passive astonishment. T
buildings seemed worn by weeks of summer heat but the peo
seemed worn by centuries of anguish She stood watching the
disarmed by an enormous sense of unreality

That sense of unreality had been her only feeling since the ea
hours of the morning—since the moment when at the end of
empty highway she had walked into an unknown town and stopp
the first passer by to ask where she was

"Watsonville he answered What state please?" she ask
The man glanced at her said "Nebraska" and walked has
away She smiled mirthlessly knowing that he wondered where
had come from and that no explanation he could imagine would
as fantastic as the truth Yet it was Watsonville that seemed f
tastic to her as she walked through its streets to the railroad
tion She had lost the habit of observing despair as the normal
dominant aspect of human existence so normal as to become
noticed—and the sight of it struck her in all of its senseless futi
he was seeing the brand of pain and fear on the faces of peo

the look of evasion that refuses to know it—they seemed to be ng through the motions of some enormous pretense acting out a al to ward off reality, letting the earth remain unseen and their s unlived, in dread of something namelessly forbidden—yet forbidden was the simple act of looking at the nature of their l and questioning their duty to bear it She was seeing it so . them,

at, she ... no reason whatever and then she remembered that son was the one power they had banished from their existence.

ushed as a deserter

The wording of the paragraph suggested that her disappearance l been a prominent public issue not yet dropped There were er suggestions of it a mention of Miss Taggart s tragic death a story about the growing number of plane crashes—and, on the k page an ad offering a $100 000 reward to the person who uld find the wreckage of her plane signed by Henry Rearden.

The last gave her a stab of urgency, the rest seemed meaningless en, slowly she realized that her return was a public event which uld be taken as big news She felt a lethargic weariness at the spect of a dramatic homecoming of facing Jim and the press of nessing the excitement. She wished they would get it over with in r absence

At the airfield she saw a small town reporter interviewing some parting officials She waited till he had finished then she ap- oached him extended her credentials and said quietly to the ping stare of his eyes "I m Dagny Taggart Would you make it own, please that I m alive and that I ll be in New York this ernoon?" The plane was about to take off and she escaped the cessity of answering questions

She watched the prairies, the rivers the towns slipping past at an touchable distance below—and she noted that the sense of detach nt one feels when looking at the earth from a plane was the same se she felt when looking at people only her distance from peop emed longer

The passengers were listening to some radio broadcast wi ared to be important judging by their earnest attenti ught brief snatches of fraudulent voices talking about

of new invention that was to bring some undefined benefits to sc
undefined public's welfare The words were obviously chosen
convey no specific meaning whatever, she wondered how one co
pretend that one was hearing a speech, yet that was what the p
sengers were dou ... he performance
a child who, not ... otained a
anything he wisl ... though
the incomprehen
knows that he is playing a game, these people pretend to the
selves that they are not pretending, they know no other state o
existence

The sense of unreality remained as her only feeling when sh
landed, when she escaped a crowd of reporters without being se
—by avoiding the taxi stands and leaping into the airport bus
when she rode on the bus, then stood on a street corner, looking
New York. She felt as if she were seeing an abandoned city

She felt no sense of homecoming, when she entered her apar
ment, the place seemed to be a convenient machine that she cou
use for some purpose of no significance whatever

But she felt a quickened touch of energy, like the first break
a fog—a touch of meaning—when she picked up the telephone
ceiver and called Rearden's office in Pennsylvania

'Oh, Miss Taggart Miss Taggart!' said, in a joyous mo
the voice of the severe, unemotional Miss Ives

"Hello, Miss Ives I haven t startled you, have I? You knew t
I was alive?'

"Oh yes! I heard it on the radio this morning"

'Is Mr Rearden in his office?'

'No, Miss Taggart He he's in the Rocky Mountains, sea
ing for that is "

"Yes, I know Do you know where we can reach him?"

'I expect to hear from him at any moment He s stopping in
Gatos, Colorado, right now I phoned him, the moment I heard
news, but he was out and I left a message for him to call me
see, he s out flying most of the day . . . but he ll call me wher
comes back to the hotel"

"What hotel is it?"

"The Eldorado Hotel, in Los Gatos"

"Thank you, Miss Ives' She was about to hang up

'Oh, Miss Taggart!

"Yes?"

"What was it that happened to you? Where were you?"

"I . . I ll tell you when I see you I m in New York now
When Mr Rearden calls, tell him please that I ll be in my office."

"Yes, Miss Taggart"

She hung up, but her hand remained on the receiver, clinging
to her first contact with a matter that had importance. She looked
at her apartment and at the city in the window, feeling reluctant
to sink again into the dead fog of the meaningless

She raised the receiver and called Los Gatos

'Eldorado Hotel, said a woman s drowsily resentful voice.

Would you take a message for Mr Henry Rearden? Ask him
:n he comes in, to—"
Just a minute please," drawled the voice in the impatient tone
: resents any effort as an imposition
he heard the clicking of switches some buzzing, some breaks of
nce and then a man s clear, firm voice answering "Hello? It
. Hank Rearden.
he stared at the receiver as at the muzzle of a gun feeling
pped, unable to breathe
Hello?" he repeated
Hank is that you?"
he heard a low sound more a sigh than a gasp and then the
g empty crackling of the wire
Hank!" There was no answer "Hank! she screamed in terror
he thought she heard the effort of a breath—then she heard a
sper which was not a question, but a statement saying every
ig "Dagny"
Hank I m sorry—oh, darling I m sorry!—didn t you know?"
Where are you Dagny?'
'Are you all right?"
'Of course."
'D dn t you know that I was back and and alive?"
'No I didn t know it'
Oh God, I'm sorry I called I—"
'What are you talking about? Dagny where are you?"
'In New York Didn't you hear about it on the radio?
'No I've just come in."
'D dn't they give you a message to call Miss Ives?"
'No"
'Are you all right?"
'Now?" she heard his soft low chuckle She was hearing the
ind of unreleased laughter the sound of youth growing in his
ce with every word. "When did you come back?
'This morning"
'Dagny where were you?"
She did not answer at once "My plane crashed" she said. "In
: Rockies I was picked up by some people who helped me but
could not send word to anyone
The laughter went out of his voice "As bad as that?"
"Oh oh the crash? No, it wasn t bad I wasn t hurt. Not
iously"
"Then why couldn t you send word?"
"There were no no means of communication"
"Why did it take you so long to get back?'
"I can t answer that now"
"Dagny were you in danger?
The half-smiling half bitter tone of her voice was almost re
she answered "No"
"Were you held prisoner?"
"No—not really"
"Then you could have returned sooner but didn't?"

"That's true—but that's all I can tell you."
"Where were you Dagny?"
Do you mind if we don't talk about it now? Let's wait until I see you."
Of course I won't ask any questions Just tell me are you s now?
Safe? Yes"
I mean have you suffered any permanent injuries or con quences?"
She answered with the same sound of a cheerless smile "Inju —no Hank I don't know as to the permanent consequences."
"Will you still be in New York tonight?
"Why yes I'm I'm back for good'
"Are you?
"Why do you ask that?"
"I don't know I guess I'm too used to what it's like when when I can't find you
"I'm back
"Yes I'll see you in a few hours His voice broke off as if sentence were too enormous to believe In a few hours" he re peated firmly
"I'll be here.
Dagny—
"Yes?
Ha ... o hear you ean I don't

... I—
'When I see you my darling So long
She stood looking at the silent receiver For the first time her return she felt pain a violent pain but it made her alive cause it was worth feeling
She telephoned her secretary at Taggart Transcontinental t briefly that she would be in the office in half an hour
The statue of Nathaniel Taggart was real—when she stood f it in the concourse of the Terminal It seemed to her that were alone in a vast, echoing temple with fog coils of for ghosts weaving and vanishing around them She stood still lo up at the statue as for a brief moment of dedication I'm b were the only words she had to offer
Dagny Taggart was still the inscription on the frosted panel of the door to her office The look on the faces of her as she entered the anteroom was the look of drowning perso the sight of a lifeline She saw Eddie Willers standing at his in his glass enclosure with some man before him Eddie m move in her direction but stopped he looked imprisoned S her glance greet every face in turn smiling at them gently doomed children then walked toward Eddie's desk
Eddie was watching her approach as if he were seeing n else in the world but his rigid posture seemed designed to p that he was listening to the man before him

"Motive power?" the man was saying in a voice that had a brusque staccato snap and a slurred nasal drawl together "There's no problem about motive power You just take—

"Hello" said Eddie softly, with a muted smile as to a distant vision.

The man turned to glance at her He had a yellow complexion, curly hair, a hard face made of soft muscles and the revolting handsomeness belonging to the esthetic standards of barroom corners his blurred brown eyes had the empty flatness of glass.

"Miss Taggart," said Eddie in a resonant tone of severity the

. . .

schedule for tomorrow and Tuesday and shoot the engines

Eddie did not answer

Meigs glanced at her with what would have been astonishment if his eyes were capable of . . . Send the orders,

. .

He raised his eyes to her, as though exhausted by hours of beating "We'll have to, Dagny," he said his voice dead

"What is that?" she asked pointing at the outer door that had closed on Mr Meigs

"The Director of Unification

"What?"

"The Washington representative, in charge of the Railroad Unification Plan.

"What's that?"

"It's . . . Oh, wait, Dagny, are you all right? Were you hurt? Was it a plane crash?"

She had never imagined what the face of Eddie Willers would look like in the . . . he was seeing it now—aging it . . . a matter . . . muscles . . . accepted is hopeless

She smiled, gently and confidently in understanding in dismissal of all problems, and said extending her hand, "All right Eddie. Hello"

He took her hand and pressed it to his lips a thing he had never done before his manner neither daring nor apologetic, but and openly personal

"It was a plane crash" she said "and Eddie, so that you worry, I'll tell you the truth I wasn't hurt not seriously

not the story I m going to give to the press and to all the others. S you re never to mention it"

Of course"

"I had no way to communicate with anyone but not because was hurt It s all I can tell you Eddie Don't ask me where I w or why it took me so long to return"

"I won t

Now tell me what is the Railroad Unification Plan?"

It s Oh do you mind?—let Jim tell you He will so enough I just don t have the stomach—unless you want me to" added with a conscientious effort at discipline

No you don t have to Just tell me whether I understood th Unificator correctly he wants you to cancel the Comet for two da in order to give her engines to a grapefruit special in Arizona?"

"That s right

And he s cancelled a coal train in order to get cars to lug grap fruit?

Yes

Grapefruit?

'That s right"

"Why?

"Dagny 'why is a word nobody uses any longer

After a moment she asked "Have you any guess about the re son?

Guess? I don t have to guess I know"

All right what is it?"

'The grapefruit special is for the Smather brothers The Smatl brothers bought a fruit ranch in Arizona a year ago from a m who went bankrupt under the Equal zation of Opportunity Bill had owned the ranch for thirty years The Smather brothers w in the punchboard business the year before They bought the ran by means of a loan from Washington under a project for the clamation of distressed areas such as Arizona The Smather broth have friends in Washington."

Well?

"Dagny everybody knows it Everybody knows how train sch ules have been run in the past three weeks and why some districts and some shippers get transportation while others don t What we're not supposed to do is say that we know it We re supposed to pre tend to believe that publ c welfare is the only reason for any decision—and that the public welfare of the c ty of New York re quires the immediate delivery of a large quantity of grapefruit." He paused then added 'The Director of Unification is sole judge of the public welfare and has sole authority over the allocation of any motive power and rolling stock on any railroad anywhere in the United States

There was a moment of silence "I see" she said In another moment she asked, "What has been done about the Winston tun nel?

"Oh that was abandoned three weeks ago They

" tra ns The equipment gave out

"What has been done about rebuilding the old line around the nel?

"That was shelved"

"Then are we running any transcontinental traffic?

He gave her an odd glance "Oh yes" he said bitterly

"Through the detour of the Kansas Western?

"No"

"Eddie what has been happening here in the past month?"

He smiled as if his words were an ugly confession "We ve been king money in the past month" he answered

She saw the outer door open and James Taggart come in accom nied by Mr Meigs "Eddie do you want to be present at the nference? she asked "Or would you rather miss this one?

"No I want to be present."

Jim s face looked like a crumpled piece of paper though its soft ffed flesh had acquired no additional lines

"Dagny there s a lot of things to discuss a lot of important

Her office was like a historical reconstruction restored and main ned by Eddie Willers Her map her calendar the picture of Nat aggart were on the walls and no trace was left of the Clifton Locey a

"I under ... dent of this

antly You you re still

No I haven t quit"

"Now the most urgent thing to do is to tell that to the press tell em that you re back on the job and where you were and—and by e way where *were* you?

"Eddie" she said "will you make a note on this and send it to e press? My plane developed engine trouble while I was flying ver the Rocky Mountains to the Taggart Tunnel I lost my way, oking for an emergency landing and crashed in an uninhabited ountain section—of Wyoming I was found by an old sheepherder nd his wife who took me to their cabin deep in the wilderness ty miles away from the nearest settlement I was badly injured nd remained unconscious for most of two weeks The old couple ... or *trans*

ss interview—"

"I m not going to give any press interviews"

"What? been calling me all day! They re wa

essential!" He had an air of panic 'It s most crucially essential!"

"Who s been calling you all day?"

"People in Washington and and others They re wat ing for your statement."

She pointed at Eddie s notes "There s my statement"

But that s not enough! You must say that you haven t quit."

'That s obvious isn t it? I m back

"You must say something about it

"Such as what?"

"Something personal

"To whom?

'To the country People were worried about you You must re assure them

'The story will reassure them if anyone was worried about me

"I mean—" E

Jim was going to pieces she thought the jerky impatience th shrillness the aura of panic were new crude outbreaks of a tone ineffec [illegible] hness

I r

out n

did nc

I

reassure the public about the state of our industry"

"Now you re—

'The public had better be as unreassured as it has the wits to be. Now proceed to business"

I—"

Proceed to business Jim

He glanced at Mr Meigs Mr Meigs sat silently his legs crossed smoking a cigarette He wore a jacket which was not but looked l ke a military uniform The flesh of his neck bulged over the collar and the flesh of h s body strained against the narrow wa stline [illegible]

pause but received no answer from either Mr Meigs is the representative of the Railroad Unification Plan You ll have many opportunities to cooperate with him"

"What is the Railroad Unification Plan?

"It is a a new national setup that went into effect three weeks ago which you will appreciate and approve of and find ex tremely practical She marveled at the fut lity of his method he would make ch has saved

so

f construction job during this period of emergency It is—temporarily—impossible to lay new track. Therefore the country's top roblem is to preserve the transportation industry as a whole, to reserve its existing plant and all of its existing facilities The na onal e ry of

ls of the country resources All of

i gross revenue is turned over to the Railroad Pool Board in 'ashington wh h — as a whole and ds, according to

ount worry, property rights have been fully preserved and otected a new form Every railroad its own operations, its train track and equipment As its railroad permits any other, uch conditions so require, to use its track and facilities without harge. At the end of the year, the Pool Board distributes the total ross income, and every individual railroad is paid not on the hap azard, old fashioned basis of the number of trains run or the nnage of freight carried, but on the basis of its need—that is, the reservation of its track being its main need every individual rail ad is paid according to the mileage of the track which it owns and aintains"

She heard the words, she understood the meaning she was unable make it real—to grant the respect of anger concern opposition a nightmare piece of insanity that rested on nothing but people's illingness to pretend to believe that it was sane She felt a numbed mptiness—and the sense of being thrown far below the realm here moral indignation is pertinent

"Whose track are we using for our transcontinental traffic? she sked her voice flat and dry

"Why, our own, of course," said Taggart hastily that is from ew York to Bedford Illinois We run our trains out of Bedford n the track of the Atlantic Southern

"To San Francisco?"

"Well, it's much faster than that long detour you tried to estab ish"

"We run our trains without charge for the use of the track?

"Besides, your detour couldn't have lasted the Kansas Western ail was shot, and besides—"

"Without charge for the use of the Atlantic Southern track?"

"Well, we're not charging them for the use of our Mississippi ridge, either"

Eddie Willers burst out laughing

Meigs glanced at him blankly "What's the matter with you?" I asked

"Nothing" said Eddie wearily, "nothing"

"Mr Meigs" she said "if you look at a map, you will see th two thirds of the cost of maintaining a track for our transcontinent traffic is given to us free and is paid by our competitor"

Why sure" he said but his eyes narrowed, watching her susp ciously as if he were wondering what motive prompted her to s explicit a statement

While we re paid for owning miles of useless track which carr no traffic" she said

Meigs understood—and leaned back as if he had lost all furthe interest in the discussion

"That s not true! snapped Taggart. "We re running a great num ber of local trains to serve the region of our former transcontinent line—through Iowa Nebraska and Colorado—and on the other sid of the tunnel through California Nevada and Utah"

We re running two locals a day" said Eddie Willers in the dry blankly innocent tone of a business report "Fewer some places"

"Wh   which any given railroa

"How many trains have been discontinued in the country in th past three weeks?

As a matter of fact" said Taggart eagerly "the plan has help to harmonize the industry and to eliminate cutthroat competition

"It has eliminated thirty per cent of the trains run in the country said Eddie "The only competition left is in the applications to th Board for permission to cancel trains The railroad to survive will t the one that manages to run no trains at all

Has anybody calculated how long the Atlantic Southern is e pected to be able to rema

impassivel

"

"It was ov

a personal matter!

She remained silent She sat looking at their faces There w st ll an element of wonder in the numbed indifference of her mind Jim had always managed to switch the weight of his failures upo the strongest plants around him and to survive by destroying the to pay for his errors as he had done with Dan Conway as he ha done with the industries of Colorado but *this* did not have even th rationality of a looter—this pouncing upon the drained carcass of a weaker a half bankrupt competitor for a moment s delay wi nothing but a cracking bone between the pouncer and the abyss

The imp

argue ?

nd she

me inconceivable manner of consciousness they knew all that she uld tell them, it was useless to prove to them the irrational horror their course and of its consequences, both Meigs and Taggart iew it—and the secret of their consciousness was the means by hich they escaped the finality of their knowledge

"I see," she said quietly.

"Well what would you rather have had me do?" screamed Tagrt. "Give up our transcontinental traffic? Go bankrupt? Turn the ulroad into a miserable East Coast local?" Her two words seemed ... he seemed to be

ay for any extra costs! Something had to be done! We had to have track!"

Meigs was looking at him with a glance of part astonishment, art-disgust

"I am not arguing, Jim," she said dryly

"We couldn't permit a railroad like Taggart Transcontinental to rash! It would have been a national catastrophe! We had to think f all the cities and industries and shippers and passengers and emloyees and stockholders whose lives depend on us! It wasn't just or ourselves it was for the public welfare! Everybody agrees that he Railroad Unification Plan is practical! The best informed—"

"Jim," she said, "if you have any further business to discuss with ne—discuss it."

"You've never considered the social angle of anything, he said, in sullen ...

... herself—and who was now seeing that his course was narrowing and that he was to be ground between two straight walls

"Mr. M... ...bitterly amused ...

...ion.

"It's perfectly useless to theorize about the future snapped Taggart, "when we have to take care of the emergency of the moment In the long run—"

"In the long run, we'll all be dead," said Meigs

Then, abruptly, he shot to his feet "I'll run along Jim" he said "I've got no time to waste on conversations" He added, "You talk to her about that matter of doing something to stop all those train wrecks—if she's the little girl who's such a wizard at railroading" It was said inoffensively, he was a man who would not know when he was giving offense or taking it

"I'll see you later, Cuffy" said Taggart, as Meigs walked out with no parting glance at any of them

Taggart looked at her, expectantly and fearfully as if

her comment yet desperately hoping to hear some word, any wor
"Well? she asked

he cried, to th
to to discuss, th
most important one of all the—"
'Your growing number of train wrecks?"
"No! Not that"
'What, then?'
"It s that you re going to appear on Bertram Scudder's radi
program tonight"
She leaned back "Am I?'
"Dagny its imperative it's crucial, there's nothing to be don
about it to refuse is out of the question in times like these one ha
no choice and—'
She glanced at her watch "I'll give you three minutes to explain-
if you want to be heard at all And you d better speak straight."
"All right
on the h
and Mr T
to the nat
haven't q
"Why?"
"Because everybody thought you had! You don't know

no order, no no respect for authority
people seem to be on the verge of panic'
"Well?"

ical stuff being whispered about it but what they whisper mostly
that no decent man will work for those people They mean the
people in Washington
you were so famous b
plane crash Nobody t
had broken the law t
a lot of popular
of well unrest.
on the air and tell people that it isn t true that Directive 10-289
destroying industry that it s a sound piece of legislation devised for
everybody s good and that if they'll just be patient a little longer
things will improve and prosperity will return They don't believe
any public official any more You you re an industrialist one
the few left of the old school and the only one come

ck after they thought you'd gone You're known as . . . as a actionary who's opposed to Washington policies So the people will lieve you It would have a great influence on them, it would ttress their confidence, it would help their morale Now do you e?"

He had rushed on, encouraged by the odd look of her face, a ok of contemplation that was almost a faint half-smile

She had listened, hearing, through his words, the sound of Rearn's voice saying to her on a spring evening over a year ago "They ed some

. . . . . .

. . .

w them.

"Now do you see?"

"Oh yes, Jim, I see!"

He could not interpret the sound of her voice, it was low, it was rt moan, part-chuckle, part triumph—but it was the first sound of notion to come from her, and he plunged on, with no choice but hope "I promised them in Washington that you'd speak! We can't l them—not in an issue of this kind! We can't afford to be suscted of disloyalty. It

rtr

ogr

ok

op! . . . the office of the Morale Conditioner has—"

"The *what?*"

"The Morale Conditioner—that's Chuck Morrison—has called me ree times to make sure that nothing would go wrong They've ued orders to all the news broadcasters, who've been announcing all day all . . .

. . .

e circumstances She said, You know what I think of the Washgton policies and of Directive 10 289"

"At a time like this, we can't afford the luxury of thinking!"

She laughed aloud

"But don't you see that you can't refuse them now?" he yelled. f you don't appear after all those announcements it will support e rumors, it will amount to an open declaration of disloyalty!"

"The trap won't work, Jim"

"What trap?"

"The one you're always setting up"

"I don't know what you mean!"

"Yes, you do You knew—all of you knew it—that I would refuse you pushed me into a public trap, where my refusal would ecome an embarrassing scandal for you, more embarrassing than u thought I'd dare to cause You were counting on me to sa ur faces and the necks you stuck out. I won't save them."

"But I promised it!"

"I didn't "

"But we can't refuse them! Don't you see that they've got e hogtied? That they're holding us by the throat? Don't you kno what they can do to us through this Railroad Pool, or through th Unification Board, or through the moratorium on our bonds!"

'I knew that two years ago "

He was shaking, there was some formless, desperate, almost supe stitious quality in his terror, out of proportion to the dangers h named She felt suddenly certain that it came from something deepe than his fear of bureaucratic reprisal, that the reprisal was the on identification of it which he would permit himself to know, a rea suring ident

his true mo

he wanted t

and Wesley

sanction nc

though the

their victim

motive and their hysterical insistence With an awed contempt awed by the enormity of the sight—she wondered what inner d gradation those men had to reach in order to arrive at a level

rproval of a

who thoug

we have no choice! he cried "Nobody has any choice!"

"Get out of here," she said, her voice very quiet and low

Some tonal quality in the ... the note

th ... s, l

kr ...

of

more of the attacks of disgust which he was learning to endure as chronic condition.

After a moment, he asked "Dagny, what became of Quent Daniels? You were flying after him, weren t you?"

"Yes " she said He s gone "

"To the destroyer?'

The word hit her like a physical blow It was the first touch the outer world upon that radiant presence which she had ke within her all day as a silent ... visio

not to l

about,

she rea

"Yes

Then she closed her hands over the edge of the desk, to stead her purpose and her posture, and said, with the bitter hint of a smile, "Well, Eddie, let's see what two impractical persons, like you and me, can do about preventing the train wrecks "

It was two hours later—when she was alone at her desk, bent over sheets of paper that bore nothing but figures yet were like a -picture film unrolling to tell her the whole story of the rail d in the past four weeks—that the buzzer rang and her secretary's

ice said, "Mrs Rearden to see you, Miss Taggart "
"Mr Rearden?" she asked incredulously, unable to believe either.
"No, Mrs R

in"
earden's
wore a
r

s
ust as if she were swinging her hips
"How do you do, Miss Taggart," she said in a lazily gracious voice,
drawing room voice which seemed to strike, in that office, the
ne style of incongruity as her suit and her bow
Dagny inclined her head gravely
Lillian glanced about the office, her glance had the same style of
usement as her hat an amusement purporting to express maturity
the conviction that life could be nothing but ridiculous
"Please sit down," said Dagny
Lillian sat down
. Wh
e bi
r sha
poster to the world, but self-evidently logical to the two of
n She stressed it by remaining silent
"What can I do for *you*?"
"I came to tell you," said Lillian pleasantly, "that you will appear
Bertram Scudder's broadcast tonight"
She detected no astonishment in Dagny's face no shock, only the
ice of an engineer studying a motor that makes an irregular
nd. "I assume," said Dagny, "that you are fully aware of the
n of your sentence."
"Oh yes!" said Lillian
"Then proceed to support it"
"I beg your pardon?"
"Proceed to tell me."
Lillian gave a brief little laugh, its forced brevity betraying that
was not quite the attitude she had expected "I am sure that no
thy explanations will be necessary" she said "You know why
appearance on that broadcast is important to those in power
ow why you have refused to appear I know your convictions
he subject You may have attached no importance to it but you
now that my sympathy has always been on the side of the sys-
now in power Therefore, you will understand my interest *in*
ssue and my place in it When your brother told me that you
refused, I decided to take a hand in the matter—because, you
I am one of the very few who know that you are not *in a posi*
to refuse"
am not one of those few, as yet," said Dagny
Lillian smiled. "Well yes, I must explain a little *further*
e that your appearance will have the same value

those in power as—as the action of my husband when he signed Gift Certificate that turned Rearden Metal over to them You l how frequently and how usefully they have been mentioning all of their propaganda."

"I didn t know that said Dagny sharply

"Oh of course you have been away for most of the last months so you might have missed the constant reminders—ii press on the radio in public speeches—that even Hank Rea approves of and supports Directive 10 289, since he has volunt signed his Metal over to the nation Even Hank Rearden discourages a great many recalcitrants and helps to keep the line She leaned back and asked in the tone of a casual aside, "I you ever asked him why he signed?

Dagny did not answer she did not seem to hear that it was a c tion she sat still and her face was expressionless, but her eyes see too large and they were fixed on Lillian s, as if she were now n upon nothing but hearing Lillian to the end

No I didn t think you knew it I didn't think that he would tell you said Lillian her voice smoother, as if recognizing signposts and sliding comfortably down the anticipated co "Yet you must learn the reason that made him sign—because the same reason that will make you appear on Bertram Scud broadcast tonight

She paused wishing to be urged, Dagny waited

It is a reason s id Lillian 'which should please you—as f my husband s action is concerned Consider what that signa meant to him Rearden Metal was his greatest achievement, summation of the best in his life, the final symbol of his pri and my husband as you have reason to know, is an extremely sionate man his pride in himself being, perhaps, his greatest pas Rearden Metal was more than an achievement to him, it was symbol of his ability to achieve of his independence, of his strug of his rise It was his property, his by right—and you know v rights mean to a man as strict as he and what property mean a man as possessive He would have gladly died to defend it, ra than surrender it to the men he despised This is what it mean him—and this is what he gave up You will be glad to know tha gave it up for *your* sake Miss Taggart. For the sake of your rep tion and your honor He signed the Gift Certificate surrende Rearden Metal—under the threat that the adultery he was carr on with you would be exposed to the eyes of the world Oh yes, ou l se ad

tion at the magnitude of the sacrifice a man has made for privilege of using your body You have undoubtedly taken g pleasure in the nights which he spent in your bed You may t take pleasure in the knowledge of what those nights have cost h And since—you like bluntness, don t you, Miss Taggart?—s your chosen status is that of a whore, I take my hat off to you as

tone Dagny was still looking at her, but the intensity had l from Dagny's eyes and posture Lillian wondered why she f Dagny's face were hit by a spotlight. She could detect no ar expression, it was simply a face in natural repose—and nty seemed to come from its structure, from the precision of p planes, the firmness of the mouth, the steadiness of the he could not decipher the expression of the eyes, it seemed in-ous, it resembled the calm, not of a woman, but of a scholar, that peculiar, luminous quality which is the fearlessness of d knowledge

was I," said Lillian softly, "who informed the bureaucrats my husband's adultery"

gny noticed the first flicker of feeling in Lillian's lifeless eyes.

rstand that plea or to know what response Lillian had hoped nd, she knew only that she had not found it, when she heard the den shrillness of Lillian's voice "Have you understood me?"

Yes."

Then you know what I demand and why you'll obey me You ught you were invincible, you and he, didn't you?" The voice was mpting smoothness, but it was jerking unevenly "You have rays acted on no will but your own—a luxury I have not been le to afford. For once and in compensation, I will see you acting t mind. You can't fight me You can't buy your way out of it, th those do

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am, I

"Yes." ou understand me?"

"Then no further explanations are necessary, only the reminder hat all the factual evidence—hotel registers, jewelry bills and stuff ke that—is still in the possession of the right persons and will be roadcast on every radio program tomorrow, unless you appear on ee radio program tonight. Is this clear?"

"Yes."

"Now what is your answer?" She saw the luminous scholar-eye looking at her, and suddenly she felt as if too much of her wer seen and as if she were not seen at all.

"I am glad that you have told me," said Dagny. "I will appear o Bertram Scudder's broadcast tonight"

There was a beam of white light beating down upon the glitter metal of a microphone—in the center of a glass cage impriso her with Bertram Scudder The sparks of glitter were green blue, the microphone was made of Rearden Metal

Above them, beyond a sheet of glass, she could distinguis booth with two rows of faces looking down at her the lax an face of James Taggart, with Lillian Rearden beside him, her h resting reassuringly on his arm—a man who had arrived by pl from Washington and had been introduced to her as Chick Mo son—and a group of young men from his staff, who talked ab percentage curves of intellectual influence and acted like motorc cops

Bertram Scudder seemed to be afraid of her He clung to microphone spitting words into its delicate mesh, into the ear

ing in overcolored detail her month of convalescence in the lo cabin of a sheepherder, then her heroic trudging down fifty m of mountain trails for the sake of resuming her duties to the pe in this grave hour of national emergency

" And if any of you have been deceived by vicious rum aimed to undermine your faith in the great social program of leaders—you may trust the word of Miss Taggart, who—"

woman who has often been critical of the government in the and who may be said to represent the extreme, conservative v point held by such giants of industry as Hank Rearden Yet she—"

She wondered at how easy it felt, when one did not have to she seemed to be standing naked on public display, and a bean light was enough to support her, because there was no weigh pain in her no hope, no regret, no concern, no future

" And now, ladies and gentlemen, I will present to you heroine of this night, our most uncommon guest, the—'

Pain came back to her in a sudden, piercing stab, like a splinter from the glass of a protective wall shattered by the know edge that the next words would be hers, it came back for the brief length of a name in her mind, the name of the man she had called the destroyer she did not want him to hear what she would now have to say If you hear it—the pain was like a voice crying it to him—you won t believe the things I have said to you—no e things which I have not said, but which you knew

my every movement, you who're watching me now, wher-
ou are—you will hear it—but it has to be said
ie last descendant of an illustrious name in our industrial
, the woman executive possible only in America the Operat-
:e President of a great railroad—Miss Dagny Taggart!"
I she felt the touch of Rearden Metal, as her hand closed
e stem of the microphone, and it was suddenly easy, not with
igged ease of indifference, but with the bright, clear, living
: action.
ame here to tell you about the social program, the political
and the moral philosophy under which you are now living"
re was so calm, so natural, so total a certainty in the sound
voice that the mere sound seemed to carry an immense
siveness
u have heard it said that I believe that this system has de-
... as its
... ieard it
... system
... es, such
... ibout it.
... political
... the past
reactionary who opposed every step, measure, slogan and
se of the present system. Now you hear him praised as our
st industrialist, whose judgment on the value of economic
s may safely be trusted It is true You may trust his judg
... the power

ossible and to permit a country to survive Consider
now about his views At such times as he was able to speak,
ave heard him tell you that this government's policies were
g you to enslavement and destruction Yet he did not de-
e the final climax of these policies—Directive 10 289 You
heard him fighting for his rights—his and yours—for his
... Directive 10-289

my views also by the motive of that action, because his convictio
are mine

[illegible] dan's mistress Let th

body? I was Have I experienced the most violent form of sel
pleasure? I have If this now makes me a disgraced woman in yo
eyes—let your estimate be your own concern I will stand on mine

Bertram Scudder was staring at her, this was not the speech h
had expected and he felt, in dim panic, that it was not proper
let it continue, but she was the special guest whom the Washi
ton rulers had ordered him to treat cautiously, he could not
certain whether he was now supposed to interrupt her or not, b
sides, he enjoyed hearing this sort of story In the audience boo
James Taggart and Lillian Rearden sat frozen, like animals paraly
by the headlight of a train rushing down upon them they were t
only ones present who knew the connection between the words th
were hearing and the theme of the broadcast, it was too late f
them to move they dared not assume the responsibility of a mov
ment or of whatever was to follow In the control room a you
intellectual of Chick Morrison's staff stood ready to cut the broa
cast off the air in case of trouble, but he saw no political significan
in the speech he was hearing no element he could construe as da
gerous to his masters He was accustomed to hearing speech
extorted by unknown pressure from unwilling victims, and he co
cluded that this was the case of a reactionary forced to confess
scandal and that, therefore, the speech had, perhaps, some poli
value, besides he was curious to hear it.

"I am proud that he had chosen me to give him pleasure and th
it was he who had been my choice. It was not—as it is for most
you—an act of casual indulgence and mutual contempt It was t
ultimate form of our admiration for each other, with full know
edge of the values by which we made our choice. We are those w
do not disconnect the values of their minds from the actions
their bodies those who do not leave their values to empty drea
but bring them into existence, those who give material form
thoughts, and reality to values—those who make steel, railroa
and happiness And to such among you who hate the thought
human joy, who wish to see men's life as chronic suffering a
failure, who wish men to apologize for happiness—or for succe

[illegible] I am n

—because I reached it!"

"Miss Taggart said Bertram Scudder nervously aren't we eparting from the subject of After all your personal rela

ning Well I thought that I knew everything about Hank Rearden ut there was one thing which I did not learn until today It was te blackmail threat that our relationship would be made public hat forced Hank Rearden to sign the Gift Certificate surrendering earden Metal It was blackmail—blackmail by your government fficials, by your rulers by your—"

In the instant when Scudder's hand swept out to knock the micro hone over a faint click came from its throat as it crashed to the oor signifying that the intellectual cop had cut the broadcast off the ir

She laughed—but there was no one to see her and to hear the ature of her laughter The figures rushing into the glass enclosure ere screaming at one another Chick Morrison was yelling un rintable curses at Bertram Scudder—Bertram Scudder was shout g that he had been opposed to the whole idea but had been rdered to do it—James Taggart looked like an animal baring its eeth while he snarled at two of Morrison's youngest assistants id avoided the snarls of an older third The muscles of Lillian earden's face had an odd slackness like the limbs of an animal ng in the road intact but dead The morale conditioners were nicking what they guessed they thought Mr Mouch would unk "What am I to say to them? the program announcer as crying pointing at the microphone Mr Morrison there's an idience waiting what am I to say?" Nobody answered him hey were not fighting over what to do but over whom to blame Nobody said a word to Dagny or glanced in her d rection No ody stopped her when she walked out

She stepped into the first taxicab in sight giving the address of r apartment. As the cab started she noticed that the dial of the dio on the driver's panel was lighted and silent, crackling with e brief tense coughs of static it was tuned to Bertram Scudder's ogram

She lay back against the seat feeling nothing but the desolation the knowledge that the sweep of her action had perhaps ept away the man who might never wish to see her again She lt, for the first time the immensity of the hopelessness of finding m—if he did not choose to be found—in the streets of the city in e towns of a continent in the canyons of the Rocky Mountains here the goal was closed by a screen of rays But one thing mained to her like a log floating on a void the log to wh h e had clung through the broadcast—and she knew that this was e thing she could not abandon even were she to lose all the rest was the sound of his voice saying to her "Nobody stays here taking reality in any manner whatever"

"Ladies and gentlemen" the voice of Bertram Scudder's uncer crackled suddenly out of the static, due to fee

When she ste
change to her ar
face She felt ce
austerely for ar
were worn out by a hopeless, losing struggle As she handed him t
tip he said quietly with too earnest, too solemn an emphasis for
a mere acknowledgment of the coins, "*Thank you* ma am"

She turned swiftly and hurried into the building, not to let him see the emotion which was suddenly more than she could bear

Her head was drooping, as she unlocked the door of her apartment, and the light struck her from from below, from the carpet before she jerked her head up in astonishment at finding the apartment lighted She took a step forward—and saw Hank Rearden standing across the room

She was held still by two shocks one was the sight of hi presence she had not expected him to be back so soon, the othe was the sight of his face His face had so firm, so confident, s mature a look of calm, in the faint half smile, in the clarity o the eyes, that she felt as if he had aged decades within one month but aged in the proper sense of human growth, aged in vision, i stature, in power She felt that he who had lived through a montl of agony he whom she had hurt so deeply and was about to hur more deeply still he would now be the one to give her support an consolation his would be the strength to protect them both Sh stood — ... deepenin
as if ... ha:
nothir ... n
table l ... ive
to his as a question and he answered by the faintest nod, barel more than a lowering of his eyelids, he had heard her broadcast.

They moved toward each other in the same moment. He seize her shoulders to support her, her face was raised to his, but he di not touch her lips, he took her hand and kissed her wrist, he fingers her palm as the sole form of the greeting which so muc of his suffering had gone to await And suddenly, broken by th whole of this day and of that month, she was sobbing in his arm slumped against him, sobbing as she had never done in her life as a woman, in surrender to pain and in a last, futile protes against it

Holding her so that she stood and moved only by means of hi body, not hers he led her to the couch and tried to make her si down beside him but she slipped to the floor, to sit at his fee and bury her face in his knees and sob without defense or disguise

He did not lift her, he let her cry, with his arm tight about her She felt his hand on her head, on her shoulder, she felt the pro tection of his firmness, a firmness which seemed to tell her tha as her tears were for both of them, so was his knowledge, that h her pain and felt it and understood, yet was able to witness i

ys been within him and at the root of their bond—this strength his which would protect her if ever hers were gone

When she raised her head, he was smiling down at her

"Hank . " she whispered guiltily, in desperate astonishment at r own break

"Quiet, darling"

She let her face drop back on his knees, she lay still, fighting for st, fighting against the pressure of a wordless thought he had been

ought that she would

When she looked up at him again he ran his hand over her rehead, brushing the hair off her face

"It's over, darling," he said "The worst of it is over for both of ,"

"No, Hank, it isn't"

He smiled

He drew her to sit beside him, with her head on his shoulder Dont say anything now,' he said You know that we both nderstand all that has to be said, and we'll speak of it but not until has ceased to hurt you quite so much"

His hand moved down the line of her sleeve down a fold of er

ot

ss

"

There's no reason why we should add to it No matter what we ave to face, there can be no suffering between the two of us No dded pain. Let that come from their world It wont come from s Dont be afraid We wont hurt each other Not now'

She raised her head, shaking it with a bitter smile—there was a esperate violence in her movement, but the smile was a sign of ecovery, of the determination to face the despair

"Hank, the kind of hell I let you go through in the last month—" Her voice was trembling

"It's nothing compared to the kind of hell I let you go through in the last hour' His voice was steady

She got up, to pace the room to prove her strength—her steps ike words telling him that she was not to be spared any longer When she stopped and turned to face him, he rose, as if he tood her motive

"I know that Ive made it worse for you,' she said, pointi the radio.

He shook his head "No"

"Hank there's something I have to tell you"

"So have I Will you let me speak first? You see, it's something I should have said to you long ago Will you let me speak and not answer me until I finish?"

She nodded

He took a moment to look at her as she stood before him, as if to hold the full sight of her figure, of this moment and of everything that had led them to it

I love you Dagny he said quietly, with the simplicity of an unclouded yet unsmiling happiness

She was about to speak but knew that she couldn't, even if he had permitted it she caught her unuttered words, the movement of her lips was her only answer, then she inclined her head in acceptance

I love you As the same value, as the same expression, with the same pride and the same meaning as I love my work, my mills my Metal, my hours at a desk, at a furnace in a laboratory, in an ore mine, as I love my ability to work, as I love the act of sight and knowledge as I love the action of my mind when it solves a chemical equation or grasps a sunrise as I love the things I've made and the things I've felt as *my* product, as *my* choice, as a shape of *my* world as my best mirror, as the wife I've never had, as that which makes all the rest of it possible as my power to live"

She did not drop her face but kept it level and open, to hear and accept, as he wanted her to and as he deserved

I loved you from the first day I saw you, on a flatcar on a siding of Milford Station I loved you when we rode in the cab of the first engine on the John Galt Line I loved you on the gallery of Ellis Wyatt's house I loved you on that next morning You knew it But it's I who must say it to you, as I'm saying it now—if I am to redeem all those days and to let them be fully what they were for both of us I loved you You knew it I didn't And because I didn't, I had to learn it when I sat at my desk and looked at the Gift Certificate for Rearden Metal

She closed her eyes But there was no suffering in his face, nothing but the immense and quiet happiness of clarity

"We are those who do not disconnect the values of their minds from the actions of their bodies' You said it in your broadcast tonight But you knew it, then, on that morning in Ellis Wyatt's house You knew that all those insults I was throwing at you were *the fullest* confession of love a man could make You knew that the physical desire I was damning as our mutual shame, is neither physical nor an expression of one's body, but the expression of one's mind's deepest values whether one has the courage to know it or not That was why you laughed at me as you did, wasn't it?"

Yes," she whispered

"You said I do not want your mind, your will, your being or your soul—so long as it's to me that you will come for that lowest one of your desires' You knew, when you said it that it was my mind my will my being and my soul that I was gi[illegible] eans of that desire And I want to say it now, to let th[illegible]

mean what it meant my mind, my will, my being and my soul, ıgny—yours, for as long as I shall live"

He was looking straight at her and she saw a brief sparkle in his es, which was not a smile, but almost as if he had heard the cry e had not uttered

"Let me finish, dearest I want you to know how fully I know what im saying I, who thought that I was fighting them, I had accepted e worst of our enemies' creed—and *that* is what I've paid for ... I had accepted the

sue existed. I rebelled against their creed of human impotence and took pride in my ability to think, to act, to work for the satisfacon of my desires But I did not know that this was virtue, I never lentified it as a moral value, as the highest of moral values, to be efended above one's life, because it's that which makes life posible And I accepted punishment for it, punishment for virtue at ... ant solely by my ignorance

... their extortions I thought ... ose impotent mystics who prattle about their souls and are unable to build a roof over their leads I thought that the world was mine, and those jabbering incompetents were no threat to my strength. I could not understand why I kept losing every battle I did not know that the force unleashed against me was my own While I was busy conquering matter, I had surrendered to them the realm of the mind of thought, of principle, of law, of values, of morality I had accepted, unwittingly and by default, the tenet that ideas were of no consequence to one's existence, to one's work, to reality, to this earth—as if ideas were not the province of reason, but of that mystic faith which I despised. This was all they wanted me to concede It was ... de-

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means and let them prescribe my ends I, who took ... ability to achieve the satisfaction of my desires let them prescribe the code of values by which I judged my desires I, who shaped matter to serve my purpose, was left with a pile of steel and gold, but with my every purpose defeated, my every desire betrayed, my every attempt at happiness frustrated.

"I had cut myself in two, as the mystics preached and I ran my ... I rebelled

steel—

against

duty

plotted for my destruction I rebelled against undeserved financial injury—but I accepted a life of undeserved pain I rebelled against the doctrine that my productive ability was guilt—but I accepted, as guilt, my capacity for happiness I rebelled against the creed that virtue is some disembodied unknowable of the spirit—but I damned you, *you* my dearest one, for the desire of your body and mine. But if the body is evil, then so are those who provide the means of its survival so is material wealth and those who produce it—and if moral values are set in contradiction to our physical existence, then it s right that rewards should be unearned, that virtue should consist of the undone, that there should be no tie between achievement and profit that the inferior animals who re able to produce should serve those superior beings whose superiority in spirit consists of incompetence in the flesh

"If some man like Hugh Akston had told me, when I started, that by accepting the mystics theory of sex I was accepting the looters' theory of economics, I would have laughed in his face. I would not laugh at him now Now I see Rearden Steel being ruled by human scum—I see the achievement of my life serving to enrich the worst of my enemies—and as to the only two persons I ever loved, I've brought a deadly insult to one and public disgrace to the other I slapped the face of the man who was my friend, my defender, my teacher, the man who set me free by helping me to learn what I ve learned I loved him, Dagny, he was the brother the son, the comrade I never had—but I knocked him out of my life because he would not help me to produce for the looters. I'd give anything now to have him back but I own nothing to offer in such repayment and I'll never see him again, because it s I who'll know that there is no way to deserve even the right to ask forgiveness

"But what I've done to you, my dearest, *is* still worse. Your speech and that you had to make it—that s what I ve brought upon the only woman I loved, in payment for the only happiness I've known Don't tell me that it was your choice from the first and that you accepted all consequences including tonight—it does not redeem the fact that it was I who had no better choice to offer you. And that the looters forced you to speak, that you spoke to avenge me and set me free—does not redeem the fact that it was I who made their tactics possible It was not their own convictions of sin and dishonor that they could use to disgrace you—it was mine. They merely carried out the things I believed and said in Ellis Wyatt s house It was I who kept our love hidden as a guilty secret —they merely treated it for what it was by my own appraisal It was I who was willing to counterfeit reality for the sake of appearance in their eyes—they merely cashed in on the right I had given them

"People think that a liar gains a victory over his victim What I've learned is that a lie is an act of self abdication, because one surrenders one s reality to the person to whom one lies, making that person one s master, condemning oneself from then on to faking sort of reality that person's view requires to be faked. And if

ore gains the immediate purpose of the lie—the price one pays is the destruction of that which the gain was intended to serve The man who lies to the world, is the world's slave from then on When I chose to hide my love for you, to disavow it in public and ive it as a lie, I made it public property—and the public has claimed t in a fitting sort of manner I had no way to avert it and no power o save you. When I gave in to the looters, when I signed their Gift Certificate, to protect you—I was still faking reality, there was nothing else left open to me—and Dagny, I'd rather have seen s both dead than to permit them to do what they threatened But here are no white lies, there is only the blackness of destruction, nd a white lie is the bla
h. ty, and
tor- you a
re- me it
on ow the
un of the
you said, and I was proud to hear you—but that was e pride we should have claimed two years ago

"No, you did not make it worse for me, you set me free, you ved us both, you redeemed our past I can't ask you to forgive e, we're *far* beyond such terms—and the only atonement I can fer you is the fact that I am happy That I am happy my darling, ot that I suffer I am happy that I have seen the truth—even if my ower of sight is all that's left to me now Were I to surrender to in and give up in futile regret that my own error has wrecked my st—*that* would be the act of final treason the ultimate failure ward that truth I regret having failed But if my love of truth left as my only possession then the greater the loss behind me, greater the pride I may take in the price I have paid for that e. Then the wreckage will not become a funereal mount above , but will serve as a height I have climbed to attain a wider d of vision My pride and my power of vision were all that I ned when I started—and whatever I achieved was achieved by ans of them. Both are greater now Now I have the knowledge the superlative value I had missed of my right to be proud my vision The rest is mine to reach.

'And, Dagny, the one thing I wanted, as the first step of my re was to say that I love you—as I'm saying it now I love you, dearest, with that blindest passion of my body which comes n the clearest perception of my mind—and my love for you is only attainment of my past that will be left to me unchanged, ugh all the years ahead I wanted to say it to you while I still the right to say it And because I had not said it at our be-ing, this is the way I have to say it—at the end Now I'll tell what it was that you wanted to tell me—because, you see I w it and I accept somewhere within the past month you have the man you love, and if love means one's final, irreplaceab ice, then he is the only man you've ever loved"

Yes!" Her voice was half gasp, half-scream as under a p , the shock as her only awareness "Hank!—how

He smiled and pointed at the radio "My darling, you used nothi[ng] but the past tense"

'Oh ! Her voice was now half gasp, half moan and sh[e] closed her eyes

"You never pronounced the one word you would have rightfull[y] thrown at them were it otherwise You said, 'I wanted him,' not, ' love him' You told me on the phone today that you could ha[ve] returned sooner

as you did Only

She was leanin

yet she was look

her lips but softened her eyes to a glance of admiration and mouth to a shape of pain.

It s true I ve met the man I love and will always love I've see[n] him, I've spoken to him—but he's a man whom I can't have who[m] I may never have and perhaps, may never see again."

"I think I've always known that you would find him I knew wh[at] you felt for me, I knew how much it was, but I knew that I was n[ot] your final choice What you'll give him is not taken away fro[m] me, it s what I've never had. I can t rebel against it What I ve h[ad] means too much to me—and that I've had it, can never be changed"

"Do you want me to say it, Hank? Will you understand it, if say that I'll aways love you?"

"I think I ve understood it before you did"

"I've always seen you as you are now That greatness of you which you are just beginning to allow yourself to know—I ve alwa[ys] known it and I ve watched your struggle to discover it Don't spe[ak] of atonement you have not hurt me, your mistakes came from yo[ur] magnificent integrity under the torture of an impossible code—a[nd] your fight against it did not bring me suffering, it brought me t[he] feeling I've found too seldom admiration If you will accept it, will always be yours What you meant to me can never be change[d] But the man I met—he is the love I had wanted to reach long b[e]fore I knew that he existed and I think he will remain beyond r[each], but that I love him will be enough to keep me living"

He took her hand and pressed it to his lips "Then you kn[ow] what I feel he said "and why I am still happy"

Looking up at his face, she realized that for the first time he w[as] what she had always thought him intended to be a man with immense capacity for the enjoyment of existence The taut look endurance of fiercely unadmitted pain, was gone, now, in the mi[dst] of the wreckage and of his hardest hour, his face had the serenity pure strength it had the look she had seen in the faces of the m[en] in the valley

'Hank," she whispered, "I don t think I can explain it, but I f[eel] that I have committed no treason, either to you or to him"

"You haven t"

Her eyes seemed abnormally alive in a face drained of color if her consciousness remained untouched in a body broken by ustion. He made her sit down and slipped his arm along t

ack of the couch, not touching her, yet holding her in a protective
brace

Now tell me," he asked, "where were you?"

I can't tell you that I've given my word never to reveal any-
ng about it I can say only that it's a place I found by accident,
en I crashed, and I left it blindfolded—and I wouldn't be able
find it again"

Couldn't you trace your way back to it?"

I won't try"

And the man?"

I won't look for him"

He remained there?"

I don't know"

Why did you leave him?"

I can't tell you."

Who is he?"

Her chuckle of desperate amusement was involuntary "Who is
n Galt?"

He glanced at her, astonished—but realized that she was not
ing "So there is a John Galt?" he asked slowly

'Yes"

That slang phrase refers to *him?*"

'Yes"

'And it has some special meaning?"

'Oh yes! There's one thing I can tell you about him be
se I discovered it earlier, without promise of secrecy he is the
n who invented the motor we found"

'Oh!" He smiled as if he should have known it Then he said
tly with a glance that was almost compassion, "He's the de-
oyer isn't he?" He saw her look of shock and added, "No, don't
wer me, if you can't I think I know where you were It was
entin Daniels that you wanted to save from the destroyer, and
i were following Daniels when you crashed, weren't you?"

'Yes"

'Good God Dagny!—does such a place really exist? Are they all
e? Is there ? I'm sorry Don't answer"

She smiled "It does exist"

He remained silent for a long time.

'Hank, could you give up Rearden Steel?"

'No!" Th[illegible] he added with the
t s[illegible]
The [illegible] ords,
ha[illegible]" he
d. [illegible] ider-
nding, of compassion, of an almost incredulous wonder What
I you've now undertaken to endure!" he said, his voice low

She nodded.

She slipped down to lie stretched, her face on his knees
oked her hair he said "We'll fight the looters as long as
lon't know what future is possible to us, but we'll win

learn that it s hopeless Until we do, we ll fight for our world We'
all that s left of it

She fell asleep lying there, her hand clasping his Her last awar
ness, before she surrendered the responsibility of consciousness w
the sense of an enormous void the void of a city and of a contin
where she would never be able to find the man whom she had n
right to seek.

Chapter IV ANTI LIFE

James Taggart reached into the pocket of his dinner jacket, pull
out the first wad of paper he found which was a hundred-dollar bil
and dropped it into the beggar s hand

He noticed that the beggar pocketed the money in a manner
indifferent as his own Thanks bud," said the beggar contemptu
ously, and walked away

James Taggart remained still in the middle of the sidewal
It was th

own.

The walls of the street around him had the stressed unnatur
clarity of a summer twilight, while an orange haze filled the cha
nels of intersections and veiled the tiers of roofs, leaving him on
shrinking remnant of ground The calendar in the sky seemed
stand insistently out of the haze yellow like a page of old parc
ment, saying August 5

No—he thought, in answers to things he had not named—it w
not true, he felt fine that s why he wanted to do something tonigh
He could not admit to himself that his peculiar restlessness can
from a desire to experience pleasure, he could not admit that t
particular pleasure he wanted was that of celebration because

craving for pleasure was a dangerous breach

The day had started with a small luncheon in the hotel suite
a visiting Argentinian legislator, where a few people of vario
nationalities had talked at leisurely length about the climate
Argentina, its soil, its resources, the needs of its people, the val
of a dynamic progressive attitude toward the future—and ha
as the briefest topic of conversat Argentin

would be declared a People's State within two weeks

It had been followed by a few cocktails at the home of Orren Boyle, with only one unobtrusive gentleman from Argentina sitting silently in a corner, while two executive from Washington and a few friends of unspecified positions had talked about national resources, metallurgy, mineralogy, neighborly duties and the welfare of the globe—and had mentioned that a loan of four billion dollars would be granted within three weeks to the People's State of Argen...

...formed company The Interneighborly Amity and Development Corporation, of which Orren Boyle was president and a slender, graceful, overactive man from Chile was treasurer, a man whose name was Señor Mario Martinez, but whom Taggart was tempted, by some resemblance of spirit, to call Señor Cuffy Meigs Here they had talked about golf, horse races, boat races, automobiles and women. It had not been necessary to mention, since they all knew it, that the Interneighborly Amity and Development Corporation had an exclusive contract to operate, on a twenty year 'managerial lease," all the industrial properties of the People's States of the Southern Hem...

... the

... bo... of

... Ch... had

become famous for the parties he had given in the past six months, ever since ... had him as a progressiv...

... when Ch...

... except the ...

... tries, such as Argentina; but he had adopted an enlightening attitude and had joined the new regime, placing himself in the service of his country His home in New York occupied an entire floor of an exclusive residential hotel He had a fat blank face and the eyes of a killer Watching him at tonight's reception, Taggart had ... t of feeling he ... h his pendulous ... sexual relish in ... his Persian rugs, ... his lips about a ... His wife, the Señora Gonzales, was a small attractive woman, not as beautiful as she assumed but enjoying the reputation of a ...

to seek and, perhaps, could no longer remember The party h
bored him there had been only half a dozen persons for whose s
he had put in an appearance, and it had not been necessary
speak to that half dozen merely to be seen and to exchange a f
glances Dinner had been about to be served, when he had he
what he had come to hear Señor Gonzales had mentioned—
smoke of his cigar weaving over the half-dozen men who had drif
toward his armchair—that by agreement with the future Peop
State of Argentina the properties of d Anconia Copper would
nationalized by the People s State of Chile, in less than a month,
September 2

It had all gone as Taggart had expected the unexpected h
come when on hear [illegible]
to escape He had [illegible]
dinner as if some c [illegible]
achievement of this night He had walked out into the summ
twilight of the streets feel [illegible] and p
sued pursu [illegible]
tion of a fe [illegible]
of discoveri [illegible]
of tonight s achievement and what aspect of it now gave him
feverish sense of gratification

He reminded himself that he would sell his d Anconia Copp
stock which had never rallied fully after its crash of last yea
and he would purchase shares of the Interneighborly Amity an
Development Corporation as agreed with his friends which woul
bring him a fortune But the thought brought him nothing bu
boredom, this was not the thing he wanted to celebrate

He tried to force himself to enjoy it money, he thought, had bee
his motive, money nothing worse Wasn t that a normal motive
A valid one? Wasn t that what they all were after, the Wyatts, th
Reardens, the d Anconias? He jerked his head to stop it b
felt as if his thoughts were slipping down a dangerous blind alley
the end of which he must never permit himself to see

No—he thought bleakly, in reluctant admission—money mean
nothing to him any longer He had thrown dollars about by th
hundreds—at that party he had given today—for unfinished drinks
for uneaten delicacies for unprovoked tips and unexpected whims
for a long distance phone call to Argentina because one of th
guests had wanted to check the exact version of a smutty story he
had started telling for the spur of any moment for the clammy
stupor of knowing that it was easier to pay than to think

"You ve got nothing to worry about under that Railroad Uni-
fication Plan " Orren Boyle had giggled to him drunkenly Under
the Railroad Unification Plan, a local railroad had gone bankrupt
in North Dakota, abandoning the region to the fate of a blighted
area, the local banker had committed suicide first killing his wife and
children—a freight train had been taken off the schedule in Tennes-
see, leaving a local factory without transportation at a day s notice,
the factory owner s son had quit college and was now in jail, await
execution for a murder committed with a gang of raiders—a way

station had been closed in Kansas, and the station agent, who had anted to be a scientist, had given up his studies and become a dishasher—that he, James Taggart, might sit in a private barroom and ay for the alcohol pouring down Orren Boyle's throat, for the aiter who sponged Boyle's garments when he spilled his drink ver his chest, for the [illegible]

[illegible] indifferent, were he reduced to the state of the beggar here had been a time when he had felt some measure of guilt—t no clearer a form than a touch of irritation—at the thought that e shared the sin of greed, which he spent his time denouncing low he was hit by the chill realization that, in fact, he had never een a hypocrite in full truth, he had never cared for money his left another hole gaping open before him, leading into another ind alley which he could not risk seeing

I just want to do something tonight!—he cried soundlessly to somene at large, in protest and in demanding anger—in protest against hatever it was that kept forcing these thoughts into his mind—anger at a universe where some malevolent power would not ermit him to find enjoyment without the need to know what he anted or why

What do you want?—some enemy voice kept asking, and he alked faster, trying to escape it. It seemed to him that his brain as a maze where a blind alley opened at every turn, leading into a og that hid an abyss It seemed to him that he was running, while he small island of safety was shrinking and nothing but those alleys ould soon be left It was like the remnant of clarity in the street round him, with the haze rolling in to fill all exits Why did it ave to shrink?—he thought in panic This was the way he had ived all his life—keeping his eyes stubbornly safely on the im nediate pavement before him, craftily avoiding the sight of his road, f corners, of distances, of pinnacles. He had never intended going nywhere, he had wanted to be free of progresssion, free of the yoke f a straight line, he had never wanted his years to add up to any um—what had summed them up?—why had he reached some nchosen destination where one could no longer stand still or reeat? "Look where you're going, brother' snarled some voice, hile an elbow pushed him back—and he realized that he had col ided with some large, ill-smelling figure and that he had been unning.

He slowed his steps and admitted into his mind a recognition of he streets he had chosen in his random escape He had not wanted o know that he was going home to his wife That, too, was a fogound alley, but there was no other left to him.

He knew—the moment he saw Cherryl's silent, poised figure as he rose at his entrance into her room—that this was more ous than he had allowed himself to know and that he would ind what he wanted. But danger, to him, was a signal to

his sight suspend his judgment and pursue an unaltered course on the unstated premise that the danger would remain unreal by the sovereign power of his wish not to see it—like a foghorn within him, blowing not to sound a warning but to summon the fog

I ch
said
answer he obtained

He felt irritation at her unastonished manner and her pale unrevealing face He felt irritation at the smooth efficiency with which she gave instructions to the servants then at finding himself in the candlelight of the dining room facing her across a perfectly appointed table with two crystal cups of fruit in silver bowls of ice between them

It was her poise that irritated him most she was no longer an incongruous little freak dwarfed by the luxury of the residence which a famous artist had designed she matched it She sat at the table as if she were the kind of hostess that room had the right to demand She wore a tailored housecoat of russet-colored brocade that blended with the bronze of her hair the severe simplicity of its lines serving as her only ornament He would have preferred the jingling bracelets and rhinestone buckles of her past. Her eyes disturbed him as they had for months they were neither friendly nor hostile, but watchful and questioning

I closed a big deal today " he said his tone part boastful part pleading "A deal involving this whole continent and half a dozen governments "

He realized that the awe the admiration the eager curiosity he had expected belonged to the face of the little shopgirl who had ceased to exist He saw none of it in the face of his wife even anger or hatred would have been preferable to her level attentive glance the glance was worse than accusing, it was inquiring

What deal Jim?"

What do you mean what deal? Why are you suspicious? Why do you have to start prying at once?

"I m sorry I didn t know it was confidential You don t have to answer me "

"It s not confidential He waited but she remained silent. "Well! Aren t you going to say anything?"

Why no She said it simply as if to please him.

"So you're not interested at all?"

"But I thought you didn t want to discuss it "

"Oh don t be so tricky!" he snapped Its a big business deal. That s what you admire isn t it big business? Well it s bigger than anything those boys ever dreamed of They spend their lives grubbing for their fortunes penny by penny while I can do it like that"—he snapped his fingers—"just like that It s the biggest single stunt ever pulled "

"Stunt Jim?"

"Deal!

"And you did it? Yourself?"

"You bet I did! That fat fool Orren Boyle couldn't have swung

[illegible]

m know too much, and how to cut Chick Morrison in on it but ep Tinky Holloway out and how to get the right people to give few parties for Wesley at the right time, and Say, Cherryl, there any champagne in this house?"

"Champagne?"

"Can't we do something special tonight? Can't we have a sort of lebration together?"

"We can have champagne, yes, Jim of course

She rang the bell and gave the orders in her odd lifeless, un ntical manner a manner of meticulous compliance with his wishes hile volunteering none of her own

"You don't seem to be very impressed " he said But what would ou know about business, anyway? You wouldn't be able to under tand anything on so large a scale Wait till September second Wait ll *they* hear about it "

"They? Who?"

He glanced at her, as if he had let a dangerous word slip out in oluntarily "We've organized a setup where we—me Orren and a ew friends—are going to control every industrial property south of he border "

"Whose property?"

"Wh [illegible]

[illegible] chniques of production, to help the underprivileged who've never ad a chance to—" He broke off abruptly though she had merely at looking at him without shifting her glance "You know" he said uddenly [illegible] if you're so damn anxious to [illegible] you ought to be less indifferent [illegible] It's always the poor who lack [illegible] be born to wealth in order to now the finer feelings of altruism "

"I've never tried to hide that I came from the slums " she said in the simple impersonal tone of a factual correction "And I haven't any sympathy for that welfare philosophy I've seen enough of them to know what makes the kind of poor who want something for nothing " He did not answer, and she added suddenly her voice astonished, but firm as if in final confirmation of a long-standing doubt, "Jim, you don't care about it either You don't care about any of that welfare hogwash."

"Well, if money is all that you're interested in " he snapped " me tell you that that deal will bring me a fortune. That's you've always admired, isn't it, wealth?"

"It depends "

I think I'll end up as one of the richest men in the world" said he did not ask what her admiration depended upon "Then nothing I won t be able to afford Nothing Just name it, I can g you anything you want Go on name it"

"I don t want anything Jim"

But I d like to give you a present! To celebrate the occas see? Anything you take it into your head to ask Anything I c do it I want to show you that I can do it Any fancy you ca to name

I haven t any fancies"

Oh come on! Want a yacht?'

No

Want me to buy you the whole neighborhood where you liv in Buffalo?

No

Want the crown jewels of the People s State of England? Th can be had you know That People s State has been hinting about on the black market for a long time But there aren t any ol fashioned tycoons left who re able to afford it *I m* able to affo it—or will be after September second. Want it?"

No

"Then what *do* you want?

"I don t want anything Jim"

"But you ve got to! You've got to want something damn you"

She looked at him faintly startled but otherwise indifferent.

"Oh all right I m sorry he said he seemed astonished by h own outbreak I just wanted to please you" he added sullen "but I guess you can t understand it at all You don't know ho important it is You don t know how big a man you re married to

"I m trying to find out she said slowly

Do you still think as you used to, that Hank Rearden is a gre man?"

Yes Jim I do"

Well I ve got him beaten I m greater than any of them great than Rearden and greater than that other lover of my sister' who—" He stopped as if he had slid too far

Jim" she asked evenly what is going to happen on Septemb second?"

He glanced up at her from under his forehead—a cold glanc while his muscles creased into a semi smile as if in cynical brea of some hallowed restraint 'They re going to nationalize d Ancon Copper" he sa d

He heard the long harsh roll of a motor as a plane went b somewhere in the darkness above the roof then a thin tinkle as p ece of ice settled melt ng in the silver bowl of his fruit cop before she answered She said "He was your friend wasn t he?"

Oh shut up!

He remained silent not looking at her When his eyes cam back to her face she was still watching him and she spoke first, he voice oddly stern "What your sister did in her radio broadca s great."

'Yes I know I know, you've been saying that for a month"
'You ve never answered me"
'What is there to ans ?"
'Just as your friends in Washington have never answered her"
e subject He did not
uttered a word about
did not explain they
as if she had never
... that people will forget it Some
ople will But the rest of us know what she said and that your
ends were afraid to fight her"
"Thats not true! The proper action was taken and the incident is
osed and I don t see why you keep bringing it up"
"What action?"
"Bertram Scudder was taken off the air, as a program not in the
iblic interest ...
...
ounced that Scudders programs were disruptive destructive and
untrustworthy"
Jim I want ... he
va ... ng
m
... and I dont but—"
"Then what do you care?
"But he was innocent as far as your friends were concerned
wasn t he?"
"I wish you wouldn t bother with politics You talk like a fool"
"He was innocent wasn t he?"
"So what?"
She looked at him her eyes incredulously wide 'Then they just
made *him* the scapegoat, didn t they?
"Oh don't sit there looking like Eddie Willers!"
"Do I? I like Eddie Willers He s honest
"He s a damn half wit who doesn t have the faintest idea of how
to deal with practical reality!"
"But you do don t you Jim?"
"You bet I do
"Then couldn't you have helped Scudder?"
"*I*? He burst into helpless angry laughter "Oh why don't you
grow up? I did my best to get Scudder thrown to the lions! Some-
body had to be Don t you know that it was *my* neck if some other
hadn't been found?
"*Your* neck? Why not Dagny's if she was wrong? Because
wasn't?"
"Dagny is in an entirely different category! It had to be
or me"

"And it's much better for national policy to let it be Scudder This way, it's not necessary to argue about what she said—and if anybody brings it up we start howling that it was said on Scudder's program and that Scudder's programs have been discredited and that Scudder is a proven fraud and liar, etc, etc.—and do you think the public will be able to unscramble it? Nobody's ever trusted Bertram Sc

You see, he belonged to the Tinky Holloway faction It was pretty much of a seesaw for a while, between the Tinky Holloway faction and the Ch ... made

the so

"Oh

the ta

world

glass a

the tabulation.

"I'm trying to find out," she whispered Her shoulders were sagging and her face lo ... look that

to

de

this world!

He was shocked to see that she smiled—a smile of so fiercely bitter a contempt that it seemed incredible on her gently patient face, she was not looking at him, but at some image of her own. "That's what my father used to say when he got drunk at the corner

d not

m as

mber

it?"

"No I had nothing to do with it Its the date of some special

subject. "We ll have been married a year My it doesn t seem that long"

"It seems much longer" she said tonelessly

She was looking off again, and he felt in sudden uneasiness that the subject was not safe at all he wished she would not look as if she were see ng the whole course of that year and of their marriage

not to get scared, but to learn—she thought—the thing to do is not to get scared but to learn The words came from a sentence she had repeated to herself so often that it felt like a pillar polished smooth by the helpless weight of her body the pillar that had supported her through the past year She tried to repeat it but she felt as if her hands were slipping on the polish as if the sentence would not stave off terror any longer—because she was beginning to understand.

"If you don't know the thing to do is not to get scared but to learn It was in the bewildered loneliness of the first weeks of her marriage that she said it to herself for the first time She could not understand Jim s behavior or his sullen anger which looked like weakness or his evasive, incomprehensible answers to her questions which sounded like coward ce such traits were not poss ble in the James Taggart whom she had married She told herself that she could not condemn without understanding that she knew noth ng about his world that the extent of her ignorance was the extent to which she misinterpreted his act ons She took the blame she took the beating of self reproach—aga nst some bleakly stubborn certainty which told her that something was wrong and that the thing she felt was fear

"I must learn everything that Mrs James Taggart is expected to know and to be was the way she explained her purpose to a teacher of etiquette She set out to learn with the devotion, the discipline the drive of a m litary cadet or a religious novice It was the only way she thought of earn ng the height which her husband had granted her on trust of living up to his vision of her which it was now her duty to achieve And not wishing to confess it to herself she felt also that at the end of the long task she would recapture her vision of him that knowledge would bring back to her the man she had seen on the night of his railroad s tr umph.

She co ld n hen she told him about he eve that the lat Why? What are if the fact of his contempt were sufficient and required no reasons

She could not suspect him of malice he was too patiently generous about her m stakes He seemed eager to d splay her in the best drawing rooms of the c ty and he never uttered a word reproach for her ignorance for her awkwardness for those moments when a s lent exchange of glances among the guests

a burst of blood to her cheekbones told her that she had said wrong thing again He showed no embarrassment, he me watched her with a faint smile When they came home, after one those evenings his mood seemed affectionately cheerful He' trying to make it easier for her, she thought—and gratitude di her to study the harder

She expected her reward on the evening when, by some perceptible transition she found herself enjoying a party for first time She felt free to act, not by rules, but at her own pleas with sudden confidence that the rules had fused into a nat habit—she knew that she was attracting attention, but now, for first time, it was not the attention of ridicule, but of admiration she was sought after, on her own merit, she was Mrs Tagg she had ceased being an object of charity weighing Jim do painfully tolerated for his sake—she was laughing gaily and see the smiles of response, of appreciation on the faces around her and she kept glancing at him across the room, radiantly, like a ch handing him a report card with a perfect score begging him be proud of her Jim sat alone in a corner, watching her with undecipherable glance

He would not speak to her on their way home 'I don t know w I keep dragging myself to those parties," he snapped sudden tearing off his dress tie in the middle of their living room. "I never sat through such a vulgar, boring waste of time!" "Why, Jin she said, stunned, "I thought it was wonderful" "You would! Y seemed to be quite at home—quite as if it were Coney Island wish you d learn to keep your place and not to embarrass me public" "I embarrassed you? *Tonight?*" "You did!' "How?' "If y don't understand it, I can't explain,' he said in the tone of a mys who implies that a lack of understanding is the confession of shameful inferiority I don't understand it," she said firmly I walked out of the room, slamming the door

She felt that the inexplicable was not a mere blank, this tim it had a tinge of evil From that night on, a small, hard point fear remained within her like the spot of a distant headlight a vancing upon her down an invisible track.

Knowledge did not seem to bring her a clearer vision of Jim world, but to make the mystery greater She could not believe th she was supposed to feel respect for the dreary senselessness of th art shows which his friends attended, of the novels they read, the political magazines they discussed—the art shows, where sh saw the kind of drawings she had seen chalked on any pavement her childhood s slums—the novels, that purported to prove the futi ity of science, industry, civilization and love, using language th her father would not have used in his drunkenest moments—th *magazines*, that propounded cowardly generalities, less clear an more stale than the sermons for which she had condemned th preacher of the slum mission as a mealy mouthed old fraud Sh could not believe *that* these things were the culture she had reverently looked up to and so eagerly waited to discover

It she had climbed a mountain toward a jagged

I looked like a castle and had found it to be the crumbling ruin a gutted warehouse

"Jim" she said once after an evening spent among the men who re called the intellectual leaders of the country "Dr Simon ichett is a phony—a mean, scared old phony" "Now really answered "do you think you're qualified to pass judgment on ilosophers?" "I'm qualified to pass judgment on con men I've en enough of them to know one when I see him" "Now this

/ them." Instead of the anger she expected she saw a brief flash amusement in the lift of his eyelids That's what *you* think," answered

She felt an instant of terror at the first touch of a concept she had ot *known* to be possible What if Jim *was not* taken in by them? he could understand the phoniness of Dr Pritchett she thought— was a racket that gave him an undeserved income she could even dmit the possibility by now that Jim might be a phony in his own us ness what she could not hold inside her mind was the concept f Jim as a phony in a racket from which he gained nothing an mpaid phony an unvenal phony the phoniness of a cardsharp or con man seemed innocently wholesome by comparison She could ot conceive of his motive she felt only that the headl ght moving upon her had grown larger

She could not remember by what steps what accumulation of ain first as small scratches of uneasiness then as stabs of bewilder ment, then as the chronic nagg ng pull of fear she had begun o doubt Jim's position on the railroad It was his sudden, angry "so you don't trust me?" snapped in answer to her first, innocent questions that made her realize that she did not—when the doubt had not yet formed in her mind and she had fully expected that his answers would reassure her She had learned in the slums of her ch ldhood that honest people were never touchy about the matter of being trusted

"I don't care to talk shop was his answer whenever she men tioned the railroad, She tried to plead with him once "Jim you know what I think of your work and how much I admire you for it" "Oh, really? What is it you married a man or a railroad presi dent?" "I I never thought of separating the two" "Well it is not very flattering to me She looked at him baffled she had thought it was "I'd like to believe" he said, "that you love me for myself and not for my ra lroad" "Oh God, Jim she gasped, "you d dn't think that I—!" "No he said with a sadly generous smile "I d dn't think that you married me for my money or my position *I* have never doubted you" Realizing in stunned fusion and in tortured fairness that she might have given ground to misinterpret her feeling that she had forgotten

bitter disappointments he must have suffered at the hands of for- tune hunting women, she could do nothing but shake her head and moan, "Oh, Jim, that's not what I meant!" He chuckled softly at a child, and slipped his arm around her "Do you love me?" he asked. "Yes," she whispered "Then you must have faith in me Love is faith, you know Don't you see that I need it? I don't trust anyone around me, I have nothing but enemies, I am very lonely Don't you know that I need you?"

The thing that made her pace her room—hours later, in torture restlessness—was that she wished desperately to believe him and did not believe a word of it, yet knew that it was true

It was true, but not in the manner he implied, not in any man- ner or meaning she could ever hope to grasp It was true that he needed her, but the nature of his need kept slipping past her ever

[illegible] of her. It wa

rouse him But she had seen him look at her as if he were wai[illegible] for some reviving shot and, at times, as if he were begging She ha[illegible] seen a flicker of life in his eyes whenever she granted him some sign of admiration—yet a burst of anger was his answer, whenever she named a reason for admiring him He seemed to want her to consider him great, but never dare ascribe any specific content to his greatness

She did not understand the night, in mid April, when he returned from a trip to Washington "Hi, kid!" he said loudly, dropping a sheaf of lilac into her arms "Happy days are here again! Just saw those flowers and [illegible] baby!"

He poured him[illegible]
light, too brash a [illegible]
his eyes, and his [illegible]
ment. She began to wonder whether he was elated or crushed.

"I know what it is that they're planning!" he said suddenly without transition, and she glanced up at him swiftly she knew the sound of one of his inner explosions "There's not a dozen people in the whole country who know it, but I do! The top boys are keeping it secret till they're ready to spring it on the nation Will it surprise a lot of people! Will it knock them flat! A lot of people? Hell, every single person in this country! It will affect every single person That's how important it is"

"Affect—how, Jim?

"It will *affect* them! And they don't know what's coming but I do There they sit tonight"—he waved at the lighted windows of the city —"making plans, counting their money, hugging their children or their dreams, and they don't know, but I do, that all of it will be struck, stopped, changed!"

"Changed—for the worse or the better?"

"For the better, of course," he answered [illegible] as if it were [illegible]evant, his voice seemed to lose its fire [illegible] into [illegible] sound of duty. "It's a plan to [illegible]

) our economic decline, to hold things still, to achieve stability security"

What plan?"

I can't tell you It's secret. Top secret. You have no idea how ny people would like to know it There's no industrialist who ildn't give a dozen of his best furnaces for just one hint of warn- which he's not going to get! Like Hank Rearden, for instance, om you admire so much" He chuckled, looking off into the ire.

Jim," she asked, the sound of fear in her voice telling him what sound of his chuckle had been like, "why do you hate Hank rden?"

I don't hate him!" He whirled to her, and his face, incredibly, ed anxious, almost frightened "I never said I hated him Don't ry, he'll approve ... d." H... ainty a des -

he forced herself to smile "Yes, Jim, of course," she answered, dering what instinct in what impossible kind of chaos had le her say it as if it were *her* part to reassure him

he look she saw on his face was almost a smile and almost of itude. "I had to tell you about it tonight I had to tell you I ted you to know what tremendous issues I deal with You ys talk about my work, but you don't understand it at all, it's nuch wider than you imagine You think that running a rail is a matter of tracklaying and fancy metals and getting trains e on time. But it's not. Any underling can do that The real t of a railroad is in Washington My job is politics Politics isions made on a national scale, affecting everything, con- ing everybody A few words on paper a directive—changing life of every person in every nook, cranny and penthouse of this ntry!"

Yes, Jim," she said, wishing to belive that he was, perhaps, a of stature in the mysterious realm of Washington.

You'll see," he said, pacing the room "You think they're power- -those giants of industry who're so clever with motors and aces? They'll be stopped! They'll be stripped! They'll be brought n! They'll be—" He noticed the way she was staring at him not for ourselves," he snapped hastily it's for the people. s the difference between business and politics—we have no h ends in view, no private motives, we're not after profit, we t spend ... have to! That's ...ofit ... or

ing or begging for forgiveness, she did not know whether this triumph or terror Jim don t you feel well? Maybe you've work too hard and you re worn out and—'

'I ve never felt better in my life!' he snapped, resuming pacing "You bet I've worked hard My work is bigger than job you can hope to imagine It s above anything that grubb mechanics, like Rearden and my sister, are doing Whatever do, I can undo it Let them build a track—I can come and br it just like that!' He snapped his fingers "Just like breaking spine!"

"You want to break spines? she whispered, trembling

I haven t said that!" he screamed "What s the matter with I haven t said it!'

"I m sorry, Jim!" she gasped shocked by her own words and the terror in his eyes "It s just that I don't understand, but but I know I shouldn t bother you with questions when you're tired —she was struggling desperately to convince herself—"wh you have so many things on your mind . such . such gr things things I can t even begin to think of . ."

His shoulders sagged relaxing He approached her and drop wearily down on his knees, slipping his arms around her "Y

her duty to believe in him, that love was faith Her doubt growing—doubt of his incomprehensible work and of his relat to the railroad She wondered why it kept growing in direct p portion to her self admonitions that faith was the duty she o him Then, one sleepless night, she realized that her effort to fill that duty consisted of turning away whenever people discus his job, of refusing to look at newspaper mentions of Tagg Transcontinental, of slamming her mind shut against any evide and every contradiction She stopped aghast struck by the qu tion What is it then—faith versus truth? And realizing that p of her zeal to believe was her fear to know, she set out to le the truth with a cleaner, calmer sense of rightness than the eff at dutiful self fraud had ever given her

It did not take her long to learn The evasiveness of the Tagg executives, when she asked a few casual questions, the stale gen alities of their answers, the strain of their manner at the menti of their boss, and their obvious reluctance to discuss him—told nothing concrete, but gave her a feeling equivalent to knowi the worst The railroad workers were more specific—the swit men, the gatemen, the ticket sellers whom she drew into chat conversations in the Taggart Terminal and who did not know h

m Taggart? That whining sniveling, speech making deadhea

nmy the President? Well, I'll tell you: he's the hobo on the
ry train" "The boss? Mr. Taggart? You mean *Miss* Taggart,
't you?"

plicity of his words, she dropped all attempts at casual prod-
g, she told h m what

feit was not shock, but worse the lack of shock, as if she had
ays known it. "Thank you, Mr Willers," was all that she said
en he finished.

She waited for Jim to come home, that evening, and the thing
t eroded any pain or indignation, was a feeling of her own
achment, as if it did not matter to her any longer, as if some

the room,

pected this to come sooner or later.

"Why didn't you tell me

"Is that all

sneaky little hypocrite?

inarticulate sounds had connected, but she could
lieve the sum they made. "What are you trying to do, Jim?" she
ked, her voice incredulous and distant.

"Have you thought of my feelings? Have you thought of what
s would do to my feelings? You should have considered my
ings first! That's the first obligation of any wife—and of a
oman in your position in particular! There's nothing lower
her than ingratitude!"

For the flash of one instant, she grasped the unthinkable fa of a man who was guilty and knew it and was trying to escape b inducing an emotion of guilt in his victim But she could not hol the fact inside her brain She felt a stab of horror, the convulsion o a mind rejecting a sight that would destroy it—a stab like a swi recoil from the edge of insanity. By the time she dropped her head closing her eyes, she knew only that she felt disgust, a sickenin disgust for a nameless reason.

When she raised her head, it seemed to her that she caught a glimpse of him watching her with the uncertain, retreating, calcu lating look of a man whose trick has not worked But before she had time to believe it, his face was hidden again under th

those headlines . . that glory . . . it was not you at all it was Dagny"

"Shut up, you rotten little bitch!"

She looked at him blankly, without reaction She looked as if en uttered dn't mean

had stood from the first

He dropped down on the edge of a couch, in a posture of help less dejection "How could I have explained it to you?" he said in the tone of abandoning hope 'It's all so big and so complex. How could I have told you anything about a transcontinental railroad, unless you knew all the details and ramifications? How could I have explained to you my years of work, my . . . Oh, what's the use? I've always been misunderstood and I should have been ac customed to it by now, only I thought that you were different and that I had a chance"

"Jim, why did you marry me?"

He chuckled sadly "That's what everybody kept asking me I didn't think *you'd* ever ask it Why? Because I love you"

She wondered at how strange it was that this word—which was supposed to be the simplest in the human language, the word under stood by all, the universal bond among men—conveyed to her no meaning whatever She did not know what it was that it named in his mind

"Nobod love in the it? All I can't red to ng for voice, you" words aside

jot offensively, but sadly "I thought you could You're all I have
Sut maybe understanding is just not possible between human
beings"

"Why should it be impossible? Why don't you tell me what it is
hat you want? ...

He sighed. "I ... those
why's Your co... I'm
alking *about* can t be put into words It can t be named It has to be
felt. Either you feel it or you don't. It's not a thing of the mind,
but of the heart Don't you ever feel? Just *feel* without asking all
those

... others I believe in you. I trust you What has all that money
and fame and business and struggle given me? You're all I
have "

She stood without moving and the direction of her glance, low
ered to look down at him, was the only form of recognition she
gave him. The things he said about his suffering were lies, she
thought; but the suffering was real, he was a man torn by some
continual anguish, which he seemed unable to tell her, but which,
perhaps she could learn to understand She still owed him this
much—she thought ...
... pay
... he
It ...
... had
... want
... hero
worship she was left with the gnawing drabness of pity In place
of the men she had struggled to find men who fought for their
goals and refused to suffer—she was left with a man whose suffer
ing was his only claim to value and his only offer in exchange
for her life But it made no difference to her any longer The
one who was she, had looked with eagerness at the turn of
every corner ahead, the passive stranger who had taken her
place, was like all the overgroomed people around her the people
who said that they were adult because they did not try to think or
desire

But the stranger was still haunted by a ghost who was herself,
and the ghost had ... She had to learn to
...

What do you want of me?—was the question that kept beat
her mind as a clue What do you want of me?—she kept cry
endlessly, at dinner tables, in drawing rooms, on sleepless n

crying it to Jim and those who seemed to share his secret, to Balph Eubank, to Dr Simon Pritchett—what do you want of me? She did not ask it aloud she knew that they would not answer What do you want of me?—she asked, feeling as if she were running, but no way were open to escape What do you want of me?—she asked looking at the whole long torture of her marriage that had not lasted the full span of one year

"What do you want of me?' she asked aloud—and saw that she was sitting at the table in her dining room, looking at Jim, at his feverish face, and at a drying stain of water on the table

She did not kr

tween them, she

she had not inten

it, he had never seemed to understand much simpler questio

she shook her head, struggling to recapture the reality of the present

She was startled to see him looking at her with a touch of derision, as if he were mocking her estimate of his understanding.

"Love," he answered

She felt herself sagging with hopelessness, in the face of that answer which was at once so simple and so meaningless

'You don't love me," he said accusingly She did not answer "You don t love me or you wouldn't ask such a question"

"I did love you once," she said dully, 'but it wasn t what you wanted I loved you for your courage, your ambition, your ability But it wasn t real, any of it"

His lower lip swelled a little in a faint, contemptuous thrust "What a shabby idea of love!" he said

'Jim, what is it that you want to be loved for?"

"What a cheap shopkeeper s attitude!'

She did not speak, she looked at him, her eyes stretched by a silent question.

'To be loved *for!*" he said, his voice grating with mockery and righteousness 'So you think that love is a matter of mathematics, of exchange, of weighing and measuring like a pound of butter on a grocery counter? I don't want to be loved *for* anything I want to be loved for myself—not for anything I do or have or say or think For myself—not for my body or mind or words or works or actions"

"But then what is yourself?"

'If you loved me, you wouldn't ask it" His voice had a shrill note of nervousness, as if he were swaying dangerously between caution and some blindly heedless impulse 'You wouldn't ask. You'd know You'd *feel* it Why do you always try to tag and label everything? Can t you rise above those petty materialistic definitions? Don t you ever feel—just *feel?*"

"Yes, Jim, I do," she said, her voice low "But I am trying not to, because because what I feel is fear"

"Of me?" he asked hopefully

"No not exactly Not fear of what to me, but of you are"

He dropped his eyelids with the swiftness of slamming a door—she caught a flash of his eyes and the flash, incredibly, was for "You're not capable of love, you cheap little gold-digger!"

f all color but the desire to

re many forms of it, other

You're a gold-digger of the

... You don't marry me for my cash—but you married me for ability or courage or whatever value it was that you set as the ce of your love!"

"Do you want . . . love . . . to be . . . causeless?"

ises and reasons. Love

You have the mean,

eeper who *trades*, but

Her eyes were dark with the dangerous intensity of glimpsing er goal "You want it to be unearned," she said, not in the tone f a question, but of a verdict.

"Oh, you don t understand!"

"Yes, Jim, I do That's what you want—that's what all of you eally want—not money, not material benefits, not economic security, not any of the handouts you keep demanding" She spoke in a flat monotone, as if reciting her thoughts to herself, intent upon giving the solid identity of words to the torturous shreds of chaos twisting in her mind "All of you welfare preachers—it s not unearned money that you're after You want handouts, but of a different kind I m a gold-digger of the spirit, you said, because I look for value Then you, the welfare preachers . it's the spirit that you want to loot I never thought and nobody ever told us how it could be thought of and what it would mean—the unearned . . . You want unearned love. You

ness You want

of being what

without . . . the

necessity . . . of being"

"Shut up!" he screamed

They looked at each other, both in terror, both feeling as if they were swaying on an edge which she could not and he would not name, both knowing that one more step would be fatal

"What do you think you're saying?" he asked in a tone of petty anger, which sounded almost benevolent by bringing them back into the realm of the normal, into the near-wholesomeness of nothing worse than a family quarrel "What sort of metaphysical subject are *you* trying to deal with?"

"I don't know . . ." she said wearily, dropping her head, as if some shape she had tried to capture had slipped once more out of her grasp "I don t know . . . It doesn't seem possible . . ."

"You d better not try to wade in way over your head

he had to stop, the butler entered, bringing the

ice bucket with the champagne ordered for celebration.

They remained silent letting the room be filled by the soun which centuries (bol of joyous att of a pale gold l weaving reflections of candles the whisper of bubbles ris through two crystal stems almost demanding that everything sight rise, too in the same aspiration.

They remained silent till the butler had gone Taggart sat looki down at the bubbles holding the stem of his glass between t limply casual fingers Then his hand closed suddenly about l stem into an awkwardly convulsed fist and he raised it not as t lifts a glass of champagne but as one would lift a butcher knife.

"To Francisco d Anconia' he said

She put her glass down No she answered

"Drink it! he screamed

No she answered her voice like a drop of lead

They held each other s glances for a moment the light playing the golden liquid not reaching their faces or eyes

Oh go to hell he cried leaping to his feet flinging his gl to [illegible] then rose slo [illegible]

She walked to her room her steps unnaturally even she ope the door of a closet she reached for a suit and a pair of sh she took off the housecoat moving with cautious precision as her life depended on not jarring anything about or within her held onto a single thought that she had to get out of this hous just get out of it for a while if only for the next hour—and th later she would be able to face all that had to be faced

* *

The lines were blurring on the paper before her and raising he[illegible]

m[illegible]

fr[illegible]

in the distance said August 5

The month behind her had gone leaving nothing but the bl of dead time It had gone into the planless thankless work of rac from emergency to emergency of delaying the collapse of a r road—a month like a waste pile of disconnected days each giver averting the disaster of the moment It had not been a sum achievements brougth into existence but only a sum of zeros that which had not happened a sum of prevented catastrophe not a task in the service of l fe but only a race against death

There had been times when an unsummoned v sion—a sight the valley—had seemed to rise before her not as a sudden app ance but as a constant h dden presence that suddenly chose assume an insistent real ty She had faced it through moments J nded stillness in a contest between an unmoving decision

anyielding pain, a pain to be fought by acknowledgment, by

knew what it would be like when you made your choice And
out of bed to face an
it, even this
oments when, walking
mpse of chestnut-gold,
strangers, and had felt
if the city had vanished, as if nothing but the violent stillness
hin her were delaying the moment when she would rush to him
d seize him, but that next moment had come as the sight of some
aningless face—and she had stood not wishing to live through
following step, not wishing to generate the energy of living
e had tried to avoid such moments she had tried to forbid herself
look, she had walked keeping her eyes on the pavements She
d failed by some will of their own, her eyes had kept leaping
every streak of gold

She had kept the blinds raised on the windows of her office, remembering his promise, thinking only If you are watching me, wherever you are There were no buildings close to the height her office, but she had looked at the distant towers wondering hich window was his observation post, wondering whether some vention of his own, some device of rays and lenses permitted m to observe her every movement from some skyscraper a block a mile away She had sat at her desk, at her uncurtained windows, thinking Just to know that you're seeing me even if I'm never see you again

And remembering it, now, in the darkness of her room, she aped to her feet and snapped on the light

Then she dropped her head for an instant, smiling in mirthless musement at herself She wondered whether her lighted windows, the black immensity of the city were a flare of distress, calling or his help the rest of the world

of a girl with
startled aston
pt for a formal
exchange of greetings on a few chance encounters in the halls of the Taggart Building, they had not seen each other since the wedding.

Cherryl's face was composed and unsmiling "Would you permit me to speak to you"—she hesitated and ended on—"Miss Tagg ?

"Of course," said Dagny gravely "Come in"

She sensed some desperate emergency in the unnatural cal Cherryl's manner, she became certain of it when she

the girl s face in the light of the living room "Sit down," she
but Cherryl remained standing

I came to pay a debt, said Cherryl her voice solemn with
effort to permit herself no sound of emotion I want to apolo
for the things I said to you at my wedding There s no reason
you should forgive me but it s my place to tell you that I k
I was insulting everything I admire and defending everythin
despise I know that admitting it now doesn t make up for it,
even coming here is only another presumption there s no rea
why you should want to hear it so I can t even cancel the deb
can only ask for a favor—that you let me say the things I wan
say to you

Dagny s shock of emotion incredulous warm and painful, was
wordless equivalent of the sentence What a distance to travel in
than a year She answered the unsmiling earnestness of
voice like a hand extended in support, knowing that a smile wo
make up for it, and I

the courage that kep
married Jim for his
you see I married J
I thought that he wa
he s"—she hesitated then went on firmly, as if not to spare
anything— he s some sort of vicious moocher though I c
understand of what kind or why When I spoke to you at my w
ding I thought that I was defending greatness and attacking
enemy but it was in reverse it was in such horrible
bel evable reverse! So I wanted to tell you that I know
truth not so much for your sake I had no right to presu
that you d care but but for the sake of the things I loved."

Dagny said slowly Of course I forgive it

"Thank you she whispered, and turned to go

Sit down

She shook her head "That that was all Miss Taggart."

Dagny allowed herself the first touch of a smile no more th
in the look of her eyes as she said Cherryl my name is Dagny

Cherryl s answer was no more than a faint, tremulous crease
her mouth as if together they had completed a single smile "I
I didn t know whether I should—

"We re sisters aren t we?

"No! Not through Jim! It was an involuntary cry

"No through our own choice Sit down Cherryl" The g
obeyed, struggl ng not to show the eagerness of her acceptan
not to grasp for support, not to break. "You ve had a terrible tim
haven t you?"

"Yes but that doesn t matter that s my own proble
and my own fault.

"I don t think it was your own fault"

Cherryl did not answer, then said suddenly desperately, "Look . what I don't want is charity"

"Jim must have told you—and its true—that I never engage in arty"

"Yes he did . But what I mean is—"

"I know what you mean."

"B I there . .

"No it doesnt But that you value all the things I value does"

"You mean if you want to talk to me, its not alms? Not

ng or

Cherryl did not move her head but she looked as if it were lifted as if some bracing current were relaxing her features into that e look which combines pain and dignity

"It's not alms Cherryl Dont be afraid to speak to me"

"It's strange You re the first person I can talk to and feels so easy yet I I *was* afraid to speak to you I nted to ask your forgiveness long ago ever since I learned truth. I went as far as the door of your office but I stopped d stood *there* in the hall and didn't have the courage to go in.

I didn't intend to come here tonight I went out only to think something over, and then suddenly I knew that I wanted see you that in the whole of the city this was the only place me to go and the only thing still left for me to do"

"I'm glad you d d"

"You know Miss Tag—Dagny" she said softly in wonder, uite not as I expected you to be at all They Jim and friends they said you were hard and cold and unfeeling

"But it s true Cherryl I *am* in the sense they mean—only have y ever told you in just what sense they mean it?

"No They never do They only sneer at me when I ask them what y *mean* by anything about anything What did they mean out you?"

"Whenever anyone accuses some person of being unfeeling he ans that that person is just He means that that person has *no* seless emotions and will *not* grant him a feel ng which he does t *deserve* He means that to feel is to go against reason against ral values against reality He means What's the matter?" asked seeing the abnormal intensity of the girl's face

"It's its something I ve tried so hard to understand such a long time "

"Well observe that you never hear that accusation *in* defense nocence but always in defense of guilt You never hear it said good person about those who fail to do him justice *But* I

ways hear it said by a rotter about those who treat him as a rot those who don t feel any sympathy for the evil he s comm tted o the pain he suffers as a consequence Well it s true—*that* is wha do *not* feel But those who feel it feel nothing for any quality human greatness for any person or action that deserves adm ratic approval esteem *These* are the things *I* feel You ll find that it s o or the other Those who grant sympathy to guilt grant none innocence Ask yourself which of the two are the *unfeel ng* pe sons And then you ll see what motive is the opposite of charity"

What? she whispered

Justice Cherryl

Cherryl shuddered suddenly and dropped her head "Oh God she moaned If you knew what hell Jim has been giving me b cause I believed just what you said! She raised her face in th sweep of another shudder as if the things she had tried to comm had broken through the look in her eyes was terror "Dagny she whispered Dagny I m afraid of them of Jim and all th others not afraid of something they ll do if it were th I could escape but afraid as if there s no way out afra of what they are and and that they exist

Dagny came forward swiftly to sit on the arm of her chair an seize her shoulder in a steadying grasp "Quiet kid" she sai You re wrong You must never feel afraid of people in that wa You must never think that their existence is a reflection on yours yet that s what you re thinking

"Yes Yes I feel that there s no chance for me to exist, they do no chance no room no world I can cope with I don t want to feel it I keep pushing it back but it s comi closer and I know I have no place to run I can t explain wha it *feel* ... the terror ... hole world ... explosio ... some ho ... thing he ... wa ... ther ... tha ... o" ... nes of ... festr

... op e s minds by making them believe that that s what they r seeing But you don t have to accept it. You don t have to see through the eyes of others hold onto yours stand on your own judgment you know that what *is* *is*—say it aloud like the holiest of prayers and don t let anyone tell you otherwise

"*But* *but* nothing *is* any more Jim and his friends—they' not I don t know what I m looking at when I m among them, I don t know what I m hearing when they speak it s not real any of it it s some ghastly sort of act that they re all go ng through, and *I don t* know what they re after Dagny We've al ays been told that human beings have such a great power of know

so much greater than animals but I—I feel blinder than any

: of Hank Rearden!—oh God, what am I saying?"
know what you re saying "
mean, how am I to deal with people? I mean if nothing held
for the length of one hour—we couldn t go on could we?
I, I know that things are solid—but people? Dagny! They re
ing and anything they re not beings, they re only switches just
ve among them.

e greatest prob
uman suffering
who suffer and
owing what killed them I ll help you to understand
a big subject and a hard battle—but first above all don't be
id "

he look
wistful longing as if
straining and failing
she said softly "but
There s one change
You see I had never
Then when it hap
ied, I thought that life was much more wonderful than I had
ected And now to get used to the idea that life and people are
ch more horrible than anything I had imagined and that my

"By holding to just one rule "
"Which?"
"To place nothing—*nothing*—above the verdict of my own mind."
"You've taken some terrible beatings maybe worse than I
worse than any of us What held you through it?"
"The knowledge that my life is the highest of values too high to
e up without a fight "
She saw a look of astonishment of incredulous recognition on
herryl's face, as if the girl were struggling to recapture some sen
tion across a span of years "Dagny"—her voice was a whisper—
hat s that s what I felt when I was a child *that's* what
seem to remember most about myself *that* kind of feeling
and I never lost it, it s there it s always been there but as I
ew up I thought it was something that I must hide I never
ad any name for it but just now when you said it, it struck
at that s what it was Dagny to feel that way about
ws life—is that *good?*"
"Cherryl listen to me carefully" that feeling—with

which it requires and implies—is the highest, noblest and only on earth

"The reason I ask is because I . I wouldn't have dared think that Somehow, people always made me feel as if thought it was a sin as if that were the thing in me which resented and and wanted to destroy"

"It's true Some people do want to destroy it And when you to understand their motive, you'll know the darkest, ugliest only evil in the world

Cherryl's smile was hold upon a few drops first time in months sh there's still a chance" attentive concern and sl used to it—to you to al believe it to believe that it's real and that matter' She rose to her feet as if trying to retain the moment assurance

Prompted by a sudden causeless certainty, Dagny said sharp 'Cherryl I don't want you to go home tonight"

Oh no! I'm all right I'm not afraid, that way Not of go home'

Didn't something ha

No not really that I began to see th I'm all right I have to and then I'll deci

"Yes?"

"May I come back to talk to you again?

'Of course

"Thank you I I'm very grateful to you"

"Will you promise me that you'll come back?'

"*I promise*"

Dagny saw her walking off down the hall toward the elevato saw the slump of her shoulders, then the effort that lifted them, as the slender figure that seemed to sway then marshal all of strength to remain erect She looked like a plant with a brok stem still held together by a single fiber, struggling to heal the breach, which one more gust of wind would finish

* *

Through the open door of his study, James Taggart had see Cherryl

it across the room He reached for a cigarette, but snapped it half and flung it at a painting over the fireplace

He noticed *a vase of Venetian glass*—a museum piece, centurie d with an intricate system of blue and gold arteries twisting

rough its transparent body He seized it and flung it at the wall, burst into a rain of glass as thin as a shattered light bulb

He had bought that vase for the satisfaction of thinking of all e connoisseurs who could not afford it. Now he experienced the tisfaction of a revenge upon the centuries which had prized it—d the satisfaction of thinking that there were millions of desperate milies any one of whom could have lived for a year on the price that vase

He kicked off his shoes, and fell back on the davenport, letting s stocking feet dangle in mid air

The sound of the doorbell startled him it seemed to match his mood. It was the kind of brusque demanding impatient snap of und he would have produced if were now jabbing his finger som...

... asure ... it, he ... unce, "... Rearden to see you sir"

"What? Oh Well! Have her come in!

He swung his feet down to the floor but made no other con ession, and waited with half a smile of alerted curiosity choosing t to rise until a moment after Lillian had entered the room

She wore a wine-colored dinner gown, an imitation of an Empire aveling suit with a miniature double breasted jacket gripping her gh waistline over the long sweep of the skirt, and a small hat nging to one ear with a feather sweeping down to curl under her un. She entered with a brusque unrhythmical motion the train her dress and the feather of her hat swirling then flapping ainst her legs and throat like pennants signaling nervousness

"Lillian my dear, am I to be flattered delighted or just plain abbergasted?"

"Oh, dont make a fuss about it! I had to see you and it had be immediately thats all."

The impatient tone the peremptory movement with which she t down were a confession of weakness by the rules of their written language one did not assume a demanding manner unless e were seeking a favor and had no value—no threat—to barter

"Why didnt you stay at the Gonzales reception" she asked her sual smile failing to hide the tone of irritation "I dropped in on em after dinner just to catch hold of you—but they said you idn't been feeling well and had gone home"

He crossed the room and picked up a cigarette for the pleasure padding in his stocking feet past the formal elegance of her stume "I was bored" he answered

"I cant stand them" she said with a little shudder he glanced her in astonishment the words sounded involuntary and *sincere* can't stand Senor Gonzales and that whore hes got *himself* r a wife Its disgusting that theyve become so fashionable they d their parties I dont feel like going anywhere any I s *not* the same style any more not the same spirit *I* n into Balph Eubank for months or Dr Pritchett, or any

boys And all those new faces that look like butcher's assist After all, *our* crowd were gentlemen"

"Yeah," he said reflectively "Yeah, there's some funny kind difference It's like on the railroad, too I could get along with G Weatherby, he was civilized, but Cuffy Meigs—that's someth else again, that's ." He stopped abruptly.

"It s perfectly preposterous," she said, in the tone of a challe to the space at large "They can't get away with it."

She did not explain "who" or "with what" He knew what meant Through a moment of silence, they looked as if they w clinging to each other for reassurance

In the next moment, he was thinking with pleasurable am ment that Lillian was beginning to show her age The deep burg color of her gown was unbecoming, it seemed to draw a purp tinge out of her skin, a tinge that gathered, like twilight, in the s gullies of her face, softening her flesh to a texture of tired sl ness, changing her look of bright mockery into a look of s malice

He saw her studying him, smiling and saying crisply, with smile as license for insult, 'You *are* unwell, aren't you, Jim? look like a disorganized stableboy."

He chuckled "I can afford it"

"I know it, darling You're one of the most powerful men in l York City" She added, 'It's a good joke on New York City"

"It is"

"I concede that you're in a position to do anything That's I had to see you" She added a small, gruntlike sound of am

d noncommittal.
best, in this partic

That is always wise"

t in the past."

nphilosophical

mark? How can we ever be sure of anything?"

"Jim," she snapped suddenly, "you've got to help me!"

"My dear, I m at your disposal, I d do anything to help you," answered the rules of their language requiring that any open st ment be answered by a blatant lie Lillian was slipping, he thou —and he experienced the pleasure of dealing with an inadeq adversary

She was neglecting, he noted, even the perfection of her partic trademark her grooming A few strands were escaping from drilled waves of her hair—her nails, matching her gown, w the deep shade of coagulated blood, which made it easy to no the chipped polish at their tips—and against the broad, smo creamy expanse of her skin in the low, square cut of her go he observed the tiny glitter of a safety pin ho strap *slip*.

You've got to prevent it!" she said, in the belligerent tone of a a disguised as a command. "You've got to stop it!"

'Really? What?"

'My divorce."

'Oh . . !" His features dropped into sudden earnestness.

'You know that he's going to divorce me, don't you?"

'I've heard some rumors about it."

'It's set for next month. And when I say *set*, that's just what I an. Oh, it's cost him plenty—but he's bought the judge, the rks, the bailiffs, their backers, their backers' backers, a few islators, half a dozen administrators—he's bought the whole al process, like a private thoroughfare, and there's no single ssroad left for me to squeeze through to stop it!"

"I see"

"You know, of course, what made him start divorce proceedings?"

"I can guess"

"And I did it as a favor to *you!*' Her voice was growing anxiously rill. "I told you about your sister in order to let you get that Gift rtificate for your friends, which—"

"I swear I don't know who let it out!" he cried hastily "Only a ry few at the top knew that you'd been our informer, and I'm re nobody would dare *mention*—"

"Oh, I'm sure nobody did He'd have the brains to guess it, ouldn't he?"

"Yes, I suppose so Well, then you knew that you were taking a hance"

"I didn't think he'd go that far. I didn't think he'd ever divorce e I didn't—"

He chuckled suddenly, with a glance of astonishing perceptiveess. "You didn't think that guilt is a rope that wears thin did you, illian?"

She looked at him, startled, then answered stonily "I don't think does"

"It does my dear—for men such as your husband '

"I *don't* want him to divorce me!" It was a sudden scream "I on't want to let him go free! I won't permit it! I won't let the whole f my life be a total failure!" She stopped abruptly, as if she had dmitted too much

He was chuckling softly, nodding his head with a slow movement hat had an air of intelligence, almost of dignity by signifying a omplete understanding

"I mean . . . after all, he's my husband," she said defensively

"Yes, Lillian, yes, I know"

"Do you know what he's planning? He's going to get the decree nd he's going to cut me off without a penny—no settlement no alimony, nothing! He's going to have the last word Don't you see? If e gets away with it, then . . . then the Gift Certificate was no ictory for me at all!"

"Yes, my dear, I see"

"And besides . . It's preposterous that I should have to thi f it, but what am I going to live on? The little money I had

own is worth nothing nowadays It s mainly stock in factories of father s time that have closed long ago What am I going to do"

But Lillian he said softly I thought you had no concern for money or for any material rewards

You don t understand! I m not talking about money—I'm talking about poverty! Real stinking hall bedroom poverty! That s out of bounds for any civilized person! I—*I* too have to worry about food and rent?"

He was watching her with a faint smile for once his soft, ag face seemed tightened into a look of wisdom he was discovering the pleasure of full perception—in a reality which he could permit himself to perceive

Jim you ve got to help me! My lawyer is powerless I've spe the little I had on him and on his investigators friends and fixers but all they could do for me was find out that they can do nothing My lawyer gave me his final report this afternoon He told m bluntly that I haven t a chance I don t seem to know anyone who can help against a setup of this kind I had counted on Bertram Scudder but well you know what happened to Bertram. A that too was because I had tried to help you You pulled yours out of that one J m

now You ve got your

You can reach the big

word to the r friends

them order that d vorce decree to be refused Just have t it

He shook his head slowly almost compassionately like a professional at an overzealous amateur "It can t be done Lillian he said firmly "I d like to do it—for the same reasons as yours and I think you know it But whatever power I have is not enough in this case

She was looking at him her eyes dark with an odd lifeless ness when she spoke the motion of her lips was twisted by so a contempt that he did not dare identify it beyond knowing it

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can t be done" he said "Nobody does favors nowadays the nothing to gain in return And the stakes are getting higher higher The gopher holes as you called them are so complex twisted and intertwisted that everybody has something on ev body else and nobody dares move because he can t tell wh crack wh ch way or when So he'll move only when he has to the stakes are life or death—and that s practically the only of stakes we re playing for now Well what s your private life any of those boys? That you d like to hold your husband—w in it for them one way or another? And my personal stock-in-t —well there s nothing I could offer them at the moment in exch for trying to blast a whole court cl que out of a highly profit deal Besides right now the top boys wouldn t do it at any p ney have to be mighty careful of your husband—*he s* the

›s safe from them right now—ever since that radio broadcast my sisters"

You asked me to force her to speak on that broadcast!'

I know, Lillian. We lost, both of us, that time And we lose, h of us, now"

'Yes" she said, with the same darkness of contempt in her eyes, th of us"

t was the contempt that pleased him, it was the strange, heedless, amiliar pleasure of knowing that this woman saw him as he was, remained held by his presence, remained and leaned back in her ir, as if declaring her bondage

'You re a wonderful person, Jim," she said It had the sound of nnation Yet it was a tribute, and she meant it as such and his asure came from the knowledge that they were in a realm where nnation was value

'You know," he said suddenly, "you're wrong about those butch- assistants like Gonzales They have their uses Have you ever ed Francisco d'Anconia?"

'I can t stand him"

'Well, do you know the real purpose of that cocktail swilling casion staged by Señor Gonzales tonight? It was to celebrate agreement to nationalize d'Anconia Copper in about a month.'

She looked at him for a moment the corners of her lips lifting wly into a smile "He was your friend, wasn t he?

Her voice had a tone he had never earned before the tone of an otion which he had drawn from people only by fraud, but which w, for the first time, was granted with full awareness to the real, actual nature of his deed a tone of admiration

Suddenly, he knew that this was the goal of his restless hours, s was the pleasure he had despaired of finding, *this* was the cele- ation he had wanted

"Let s have a drink, Lil," he said

Pouring the liquor, he glanced at her across the room as she lay etched limply in her chair "Let him get his divorce" he said le won t have the last word *They* will The butcher s assistants ñor Gonzales and Cuffy Meigs"

She did not answer. When he approached she took the glass from n with a sloppily indifferent sweep of her hand She drank, not in manner of a social gesture, but like a lonely drinker in a saloon for the physical sake of the liquor

He sat down on the arm of the davenport improperly close to r, and sipped his drink, watching her face After a while, he ked, "What does he think of me?

The question did not seem to astonish her He thinks you re a ol," she answered "He thinks life s too short to notice your istence"

"He d notice it, if—" He stopped

"—if you bashed him over the head with a club? I m not too su e d merely blame himself for not having moved out of the ach Still ... r only chance."

She shifted her body sliding lower in the armchair stomach forward as if relaxation were ugliness as if she were granting him the kind of intimacy that required no poise and no respect

"That was the first thing I noticed about him" she said, "when I met him for the first time that he was not afraid He looked as if he felt certa n that there was nothing any of us could do to him—so certain that he didn t even know the issue or the nature of what he felt

How long since you saw him last?

"Three months I haven t seen him since since the Gift Certificate

I saw him at an industrial meeting too weeks ago He still looks that way—only more so *Now* he looks as if he knows it." He added "You *have* failed Lillian"

She did not answer She pushed her hat off with the back of her hand it rolled down to the carpet, its feather curling like a question mark I remember the first time I saw his mills" she said "His mills! You can t imagine what he felt about them You wouldn't know the kind of intellectual arrogance it takes to feel as if anything pertaining to him anything he touched were made sacred by the touch *His* mills *his* Metal *his* money *his* bed *his* wife!" She glanced up at him a small flicker piercing the lethargic emptiness of her eyes He never noticed your existence He did notice mine I m still Mrs Rearden—at least for another month"

Yes he said looking down at her with a sudden new interest

Mrs Rearden" she chuckled You wouldn t know what that meant to him No feudal lord ever felt or demanded such reverence for the title of h s wife—or held it as such a symbol of honor of h s unbend ng untouchable inviolate stainless honor! She waved her hand in a vague motion indicating the length of her sprawled body 'Caesar s wife! she chuckled Do you remember what she was supposed to be? No you wouldn t. She was supposed to be above reproach"

He was staring down at her with the heavy blind stare of impotent hatred—a hatred of which she was the sudden symbol, not the object He didn t like it when his Metal was thrown into common public use, for any chance passer by to make did he?"

"No he didn t

His words were blurring a little as if weighted with drops of the liquor he had swallowed Don t tell me that you helped us to get that Gift Certificate as a favor to me and that you gained nothing

I know why you did it"

You knew it at the time

"Sure Thats why I like you Lillian."

His eyes kept coming back to the low cut of her gown It was not the smooth skin that attracted his glance not the exposed rise of her breasts but the fraud of the safety pin beyond the edge

"I d like to see him beaten he said I d like to hear him scream w th pa n just once

"You won t Jimmy"

Why does he think he's better than the rest of us—he and that r of mine?"

le chuckled.

e rose as if she had slapped him He went to the bar and poured elf another drink, not offering to refill her glass

le was speaking into space, staring past him "He did notice my ence—even though I can't lay railroad tracks for him and t bridges to the glory of his Metal I can't build his mills—but n destroy them I can't produce his Metal—but I can take it y from him. I can't bring men down to their knees in admira—but I can bring them down to their knees"

hut up!" he screamed in terror, as if she were coming too

a"

s unfinished

at her mouth, as if he wanted to strike her

er fingers half-closed limply about the glass and she drank, ing the liquor down her chin, her breast and her gown

Oh hell, Lillian, you're a mess!" he said and, not troubling to h for his handkerchief, he stretched out his hand to wipe the or with the flat of his palm His fingers slipped under the gown's chine closing over her breast, his breath catching in a sudden , like a hiccough His eyelids were drawing closed, but he ght a glimpse of her face leaning back unresistingly, her mouth ... ed for her mouth, her arms outh responded, but the re-

ace Her teeth were bared in ..., but she was staring past him, as if mocking some invisible ience her smile lifeless, yet loud with malice, like the grin of a lless skull

Ie jerked her closer, to stifle the sight and his own shudder. His ds were going through the automatic motions of intimacy—and complied, but in a manner that made him feel as if the beats of arteries under his touch were snickering giggles They were both forming an expected routine, a routine invented by someone and osed upon them, performing it in mockery, in hatred, in de-ng parody on its inventors

Ie felt a sightless, heedless fury, part horror, part pleasure— horror of committing an act he would never dare confess to one—the pleasure of committing it in blasphemous defiance of se to whom he would not dare confess it He was himself!—the y conscious part of his rage seemed to be screaming to him— was, at last, himself!

They did not speak They knew each other's motive Only two rds were pronounced between them "*Mrs Rearden*" he said They did not look at each other when he pushed her into his lroom and onto his bed, falling against her body, as against a soft, ffed object. Their faces had a look of secrecy, the look of guilt, the furtive, smutty look of children defiling someone's c ice by chalking sneaky scratches intended as symbols of

Afterward, it did not disappoint him that what he had possesse was an inanimate body without resistance or response It was n a woman that he had wanted to possess It was not an act in cel bration of life that he had wanted to perform—but an act celebration of the triumph of impotence

* *

Cherryl unlocked the door and slipped in quietly, almost su reptitiously as if hoping not to be seen or to see the place whic was her home The sense of Dagny s presence—of Dagny s world- had supported her on her way back, but when she entered her ow apartment the walls seemed to swallow her again into the suffoc tion of a trap

The apartment was silent, a wedge of light cut across the ant room from a door left half-open She dragged herself mechanicall in the direction of her room Then she stopped

The open band of light was the door of Jim s study, and on th illuminated strip of its carpet she saw a woman's hat with a feath stirring faintly in a draft

She took a step forward The room was empty, she saw tw glasses, one on a table, the other on the floor, and a woman' purse lying on the seat of an armchair She stood, in unreactin stupor, until she heard the muffled drawl of two voices behind th door of Jim s bedroom, she could not distinguish the words onl the quality of the sounds Jim s voice had a tone of irritation, th woman s—of contempt

Then she found herself in her own room, fumbling frantically t lock her door She had been flung here by the blind panic of escap as if it were she who had to hide, she who had to run from th ugliness of being seen in the act of seeing them—a panic made o revulsion of pity of embarrassment, of that mental chastity whic recoils from confronting a man with the unanswerable proof o his evil.

She stood in the middle of her room unable to grasp what actio was now possible to her Then her knees gave way folding gentl she found herself sitting on the floor and she stayed there, starin at the carpet shaking

It was neither anger nor jealousy nor indignation, but the blan horror of dealing with the grotesquely senseless It was the knowl edge that neither their marriage nor his love for her nor his in sistence on holding her nor his love for that other woman nor th gratuitous adultery had any meaning whatever, that there was n shred of sense in any of it and no use to grope for explanations Sh had always thought of evil as purposeful, as a means to some end what she was seeing now was evil for evil s sake

She did not know how long she had sat there when she hear their steps and voices, then the sound of the front door closing Sh got up, with no purpose in mind, but impelled by some instinc from the past, as if acting in a vacuum where honesty was no relevant any longer but knowing no other way to act.

She met Jim in the anteroom For a moment, they looked at each er as if neither could believe the other s reality.

"When d d *you* come back?' he snapped 'How long have you en home?"
"I don t know "
He was looking at her face "Whats the matter with you?"
"Jim I—" She struggled gave up and waved her hand toward s bedroom "Jim, I know"
"What do you know?
"You were there with a woman"
ur e

ulenuer to her his new enjoyment
"Sure!" he screamed "So what? What are you going to do about

She stared at him blankly
"Sure! I was there with a woman! That s what I did because ts what I felt like doing! Do you think you re going to scare me h your gasps your stares, your whimpering virtue? He snapped fingers *That* for your opinion! I don t give a hoot in hell about ur opinion! Take it and like it!' It was her white defenseless e that drove him on, lashing him into a state of pleasure the asure of feeling as if his words were blows disfiguring a human e "Do you think you re going to make me hide? I m sick of ving to put on an act for your righteous satisfaction! Who the hell you you cheap little nobody? I'll do as I please and you ll p your mouth shut and go through the right tricks in public, everybody else and stop demanding that I act in my own ne!—nobody is virtuous in his own home, the show is only for mpany!—but if you expect me to mean it—to *mean* it, you nn little fool!—you d better grow up in a hurry!"
It was not her face that he was seeing it was the face of the man at om he wanted and would never be able to throw his deed of this ht—but she had always stood as the worshipper the defender agent of that man in his eyes he had married her for it so *cou d* serve his purpose now and he screamed "Do you w who she was the woman I laid? It was—
No!" she cried Jim! I don t have to know!"
It was Mrs Rearden! Mrs Hank Rearden!
he stepped back He felt a brief fl h of terror—because she was
to remain un
at had the in
will now want

urst out laughing "You goddamn fool! You still mean it! still want it big and pure! I wouldn t think of divorcing you— don't go imagining that I ll let you divorce me! You think it s important as that? Listen you fool there isn't a husband who sn t sleep with other women and their isn't a *wife* who doesn w it, but they don't talk about it! I'll lay anybody I please,

you go and do the same, like all those bitches, and keep y mouth shut!"

He saw the sudden, startling sight of a look of hard, unclou unfeeling, almost inhuman intelligence in her eyes "Jim, if I w the kind who did or would, you wouldn't have married me"

"No I wouldn't have"

"Why did you marry me?"

He felt himself drawn as by a whirlpool, part in relief that moment of danger was past, part in irresistible defiance of same danger "Because you were a cheap, helpless, preposter [illegible] ance at anything to eq [illegible] thought you'd know

"Without daring to ask what I am! Without reasons! Witho putting me on the spot always to live up to reason after reason a reason, like being on some goddamn dress parade to the end my days!"

"You loved me because I was worthless?"

"Well, what did you think you were?"

"You loved me for being rotten?"

"What else did you have to offer? But you didn't have the to appreciate it I wanted to be generous, I wanted to give y security—what security is there in being loved for one's virtue The competition's wide open, like a jungle market place, a bett person will always come along to beat you! But I—I was will to love you for your flaws, for your faults and weaknesses, for yo ignorance, your crudeness, your vulgarity—and that's safe, yo have nothing to fear, nothing to hide you could be yourself yo real, stinking, sinful, ugly self—everybody's self is a gutter—but y could hold my love, with nothing demanded of you!"

"You wanted me to accept your love . as alms?"

"Did you imagine that you could *earn* it? Did you imagine th you could deserve to marry me, you poor little tramp? I used to b the likes of you for the price of a meal! I wanted you to kno with every step you took, with every mouthful of caviar yo swallowed, that you owed it all to *me*, that you had nothing an were nothing and could never hope to equal, deserve or repay!"

"I tried . . to deserve it"

"Of what use would you be to me, if you had?"

"You didn't want me to?"

"Oh, you goddamn fool!"

"You didn't want me to improve? You didn't want me to ris You thought me rotten and you wanted me to stay rotten?"

"Of what use would you be to me, if you earned it all, and had to work to hold you, and you could trade elsewhere if yo chose?"

"You wanted it to be alms . for both of us You wanted us to be two beggars chained to each o"

"Yes, you goddamn evangelist! Yes, you goddam"

"Yes!"

"You chose me because I was worthless?"
Yes!"
You're lying Jim"
His answer was only a startled glance of astonishment.
Those girls that you used to buy for the price of a meal, they would have been glad to let their real selves become a gutter, they would have taken your alms and never tried to rise but you would ... because you knew that I ... that I was struggling to ... you?"
... she cried
Then the headlight she had felt rushing upon her, hit its goal—and screamed in the bright explosion of the impact—she screamed physical terror, backing away from him
"What's the matter with you?" he cried, shaking, not daring to ... in her eyes the thing she had seen
She moved her hands in groping gestures, half waving it away, of trying to grasp it, when she answered her words did not quite ... it, but they were the only words she could find "You ... you're a killer ... for the sake of killing ..."
It was too close to the unnamed, shaking with terror, he swung blindly and struck her in the face
She fell against the side of an armchair, her head striking the floor but she raised her head in a moment and looked up at him blankly without astonishment, as if physical reality were merely taking the form she had expected A single pear shaped drop of blood went slithering slowly from the corner of her mouth.
He stood motionless—and for a moment they looked at each other as if neither dared to move
She moved first She sprang to her feet—and ran She ran out of the room out of the apartment—he heard her running down the hall, tearing open the iron door of the emergency stairway, not waiting to ring for the elevator
She ran down the stairs, opening doors on random landings, running through the twisting hallways of the building then down the stairs again, until she found herself in the lobby and ran to the street.
After a while, she saw that she was walking down a littered sidewalk in a dark neighborhood, with an electric bulb glaring in the cave of a subway entrance and a lighted billboard advertising soda crackers on the black roof of a laundry She did not remember how she had come here Her mind seemed to work in broken spurts, without connections She knew only that she had to escape and that escape was impossible
She had to escape from Jim, she thought. Where?—she asked, looking around her with a glance like a cry of prayer She would have seized upon a job in a five and ten, or in that laundry, or in any of the dismal shops she passed But she would work, she thought, and the harder she worked, the more malevolence would draw from the people around her, and she would not ... when truth would be expected of her and when a lie, but

stricter her honesty the greater the fraud she would be aske suffer at their hands She had seen it before and had borne i the home of her family, in the shops of the slums, but she thought that these were vicious exceptions chance evils to es and forget Now she knew that they were not exceptions that tl was the code accepted by the world, that it was a creed of liv known by all but kept unnamed leering at her from peo eyes in that sly guilty look she had never been able to unders —and at the root of the creed, hidden by silence, lying in for her in the cellars of the city and in the cellars of their s there was a thing with which one could not live

Why are you doing it to me?—she cried soundlessly to the d ness around her Because you re good—some enormous laug seemed to be answering from the roof tops and from the sew Then I won t want to be good any longer—But you will—I d have to—You will—I can t bear it—You will

She shuddered and walked faster—but ahead of her, in the fo distance she saw the calendar above the roofs of the city—it long past midnight and the calendar said August 6, but it seem to her suddenly that she saw September 2 written above the in letters of blood—and she thought If she worked, if she st gled if she rose she would take a harder beating with each s of her climb until [illegible] company or an unc [illegible] Jim on some Septen [illegible] the parties where Ji [illegible]

Then I won t!—she screamed and whirled around and w running back along the street—but it seemed to her that in the bl sky grinning at her from the steam of the laundry, there was an enormous figure that would hold no shape, but its grin remai the same on its changing faces and its face was Jim s and l childhood preacher's and the woman social workers from personnel department of the five and ten—and the grin seemed say to her People like you will always stay honest people like y will always struggle to rise people like you will always work, we re safe and you have no choice

She ran When she looked around her once more she was wa ing down a quiet street, past the glass doorways where lights w burning in the carpeted lobbies of luxurious buildings She notic that she was limping and saw that the heel of her pump was loo she had broken it somewhere in her blank span of running

From the sudden space of a broad intersection, she looked the great skyscrapers in the distance They were vanishing qu into a ve [illegible] that they were tombstones slender obelisks soaring in memory the men who had been destroyed for having created them th were the frozen shape of the silent cry that the reward of achiev was martyrdom.

Somewhere in one of those vanishing towers, she thought, there was Dagny—but Dagny was a lonely victim, fighting a losing battle, to be destroyed and to sink into fog like the others

There is no place to go, she thought and stumbled on—I can't stand still nor move much longer—I can neither work nor rest—I can neither surrender nor fight—but this . . . *this* is what they want of me, *this* is where they want me—neither living nor dead, neither thinking nor insane, but just a chunk of pulp that screams with fear, to be shaped by them as they please, they who have no shape of their own

She plunged into the darkness behind a corner, shrinking in dread from any human figure No, she thought, they're not evil, not all people . . . they're only their own first victims, but they all believe in Jim's creed, and I can't deal with them, once I know it . . . and if I spoke to them, they would try to grant me their good will, *but* I'd know what it is that they hold as the good and I would see death staring out of their eyes

The sidewalk had shrunk to a broken strip, and splashes of garbage ran over from the cans at the stoops of crumbling houses Beyond the dusty glow of a saloon, she saw a lighted sign "Young Wom…

…nen who ran …helping suf- …if she faced …" they would …Dope? Pregnancy? Shoplifting She would answer, "I have no guilt, I am innocent, but I m—" Sorry We have no concern for the pain of the innocent"

She ran. She stopped, regaining her eyesight, on the corner of a long, wide street. The buildings and pavements merged with the sky—and …

…n enc…

…oreign…

…erent…

Then the lights switched to red, dropping heavily lower, turning from sharp circles into foggy smears, into a warning of unlimited danger She stood and watched a giant truck go by, its enormous wheels crushing one more layer of shiny polish into the flattened cobbles of the street.

The lights went back to the green of safety—but she stood trembling, unable to move That's how it works for the travel of one's body, she thought, but what have they done to the traffic of the soul? They have set the signals in reverse—and the road is safe when the lights are the red of evil—but when the lights are the green of virtue, promising that yours is the right-of-way, you venture forth and are ground by the wheels All over the world, she thought—those inverted lights go reaching into every land, they go on, encircling the earth. And the earth is littered with mangled cripples, who don't know what has hit them or why, who crawl as best they can on their crushed limbs through their lightless days with no answer save that pain is the core of existence—and

traffic cops of morality chortle and tell them that man, by nature is unable to walk

These were not words in her mind these were the words w would have named, had she had the power to find them what knew only as a sudden fury that made her beat her fists in f horror against the iron post of the traffic light beside her, aga the hollow tube where the hoarse, rusty chuckle of a relentl mechanism went grating on and on

She could not smash it with her fists, she could not batter one one all the posts of the street stretching off beyond eyesight—as could not smash that creed from the souls of the men she would counter, one by one She could not deal with people any longer, could not take the paths they took—but what could she say to th she who had no words to name the thing she knew and no w that people would hear? What could she tell them? How co she reach them all? Where were the men who could have spok

These were not words in her mind these were only the blow her fists against metal—then she saw herself suddenly, battering knuckles to blood against an immovable post and the sight m her shudder—and she stumbled away She went on, seeing noth around her feeling trapped in a maze with no exit

No exit—her shreds of awareness were saying beating it into pavements in the sound of her steps—no exit no refuge no signals no way to tell destruction from safety, or en from friend Like that dog she had heard about, she tho somebody's dog in somebody's laboratory the dog got his signals switched on him, and saw no way to tell satisfac from torture saw food changed to beatings and beatings to f saw his eyes and ears deceiving him and his judgment futile and consciousness impotent in a shifting swimming shapeless wor and gave up, refusing to eat at that price or to live in a worl that kind No!—was the only conscious word in her bra no!—no!—no!—not your way, not your world—even if this is all that's to be left of mine!

It was in the darkest hour of the night in an alley among wh and warehouses that the social worker saw her The social wo was a woman whose gray face and gray coat blended with the of the district. She saw a young girl wearing a suit too smart expensive for the neighborhood with no hat, no purse, with a br heel disheveled hair and a bruise at the corner of her mouth, staggering blindly, not knowing sidewalks from pavements street was only a narrow crack between the sheer, blank wal storage structures but a ray of light fell through a fog dank the odor of rotting water, a stone parapet ended the street on edge of a vast black hole merging river and sky

The social worker approached her and asked severely "Are in trouble?"—and saw one wary eye the other hidden by a of hair, and the face of a wild creature who has forgotten sound of human voices, but listens as to a distant echo, with s cion yet almost with hope

The social worker seized her arm "It's a dis

if you society girls had something to do bes... n

... a channel of torture an animal scream of terror She tore her arm loose and sprang back then screamed in articulate sounds

"No! No Not your kind of world!"

Then she ran, ran by the sudden propulsion of a burst of power the power of a creature running for its life she ran straight down the street that ended at the river—and in a single streak of speed with no break, no moment of doubt with full consciousness of acting in self-preservation, she kept running till the parapet barred her way and, not stopping went over into space

Chapter V THEIR BROTHERS' KEEPERS

On the morning of September 2, a copper wire broke in California, between two telephone poles by the track of the Pacific branch line of Taggart Transcontinental

A slow thin rain had been falling since midnight and there had been no sunrise only a gray light seeping through a soggy sky—and the brilliant raindrops hanging on the telephone wires had been the only sparks glittering against the chalk of the clouds the lead of the ocean and the steel of the oil derricks descending as lone bristles down a desolate hills de The wires had been worn by more suns and years than they had been intended to carry one of them had kept sagging through the hours of that morning, under the fragile load of raindrops then its one last drop had grown on the wire's curve and had hung like a crystal bead gathering the weight of many seconds the bead and the wire had given up together and as soundless as the fall of tears the wire had broken and fallen with the fall of the bead

The men at the Division Headquarters of Taggart Transcontinental avoided looking at one another when the break of the telephone line was d... Tl ... r
...ly miscalcula...
...thing, none f...
vanishing con... more precious than k... /
knew that the division storekeeper had sold their stock of wire weeks ago to unknown dealers who came by night and were not businessmen in the daytime but only men who had friends in Sacramento and in Washington—just as the storekeeper recently appointed to the division, had a friend in New York named Cuffy Meigs, about wh... Th... knew that the ...an wh... a re...
...d nt
...pairs

enemies, that his fellow workers would become mysteriously sil and would not testify to help him, that he would prove nothing, if he attempted to do his job, it would not be his any longer Th did not know what was safe or dangerous these days, when the gu were not punished, but the accusers were, and, like animals, th knew that immobility was the only protection when in doubt in danger They remained immobile, they spoke about the propriate procedure of sending reports to the appropriate auth ties on the appropriate dates

A young roadmaster walked out of the room and out of headquarters building to the safety of a telephone booth in drugstore and at his own expense, ignoring the continent and tiers of appropriate executives between, he telephoned Dagny T gart in New York

She received the call in her brother's office, interrupting an em gency conference The young roadmaster told her only that telephone line was broken and that there was no wire to repair he said nothing else and he did not explain why he had found necessary to call her in person She did not question him, understood "Thank you," was all that she answered

An emergency file in her office kept a record of all the cru materials still on hand, on every division of Taggart Transco nental Like the file of a bankrupt, it kept registering losses, the rare additions of new supplies seemed like the malicious chuc of some tormentor throwing crumbs at a starving continent. looked through the file, closed it, sighed and said "Monta Eddie Phone the Montana Line to ship half their stock of wire California Montana might be able to last without it—for ano week" And as Eddie Willers was about to protest, she added, Eddie California is one of the last producers of oil left in country We don't dare lose the Pacific Line" Then she went bac the conference in her brother's office

"Copper wire?" said James Taggart, with an odd glance went from her face to the city beyond the window "In a very sl while, we won't have any trouble about copper"

"Why?" she asked, but he did not answer There was noth special to see beyond the window, only the clear sky of a su day, the quiet light of early afternoon on the roofs of the city above them, the page of the calendar, saying September 2

She did not know why he had insisted on holding this confer in his own office, why he had insisted on speaking to her al which he had always tried to avoid, or why he kept glancing at wrist watch

"Things are, it seems to me, going wrong," he said "Someth has to be done There appears to exist a state of dislocation confusion tending toward an unco ordinated, unbalanced po What I mean is, there's a tremendous national demand for tr portation, yet we're losing money It seems to me—"

She sat looking at the ancestral map of Taggart Transcontine on the wall of his office, at the red arteries

wed continent There had been a time when

filled the blood system of the nation, and the stream of trains had been like a living circuit of blood, bringing growth and wealth to every patch of wilderness it touched Now, it was still like a stream of blood, but like the one way stream that runs from a wound, draining the last of a body s sustenance and life One way traffic—she thought indifferently—consumers traffic

There was Train Number 193, she thought. Six weeks ago, Train Number 193 had been sent with a load of steel, not to Faulkton, Nebraska, where the Spencer Machine Tool Company, the best machine tool concern still in existence had been idle for two weeks, waiting for the shipment—but to Sand Creek, Illinois where Confederated Machine had been wallowing in debt for over a year, producing unreliable goods at unpredictable times The steel had been allocated by a directive which explained that the Spencer Machine Tool Company was a rich concern, able to wait, while Confederated Machines was bankrupt and could not be allowed to collapse being the sole source of livelihood of the community of Sand Creek, Illinois The Spencer Machine Tool Company had closed a month ago Confederated Machines had closed two weeks later

The people of Sand Creek, Illinois, had been placed on national relief, but no food could be found for them in the empty granaries of the nation at the frantic call of the moment—so the seed grain of the farmers of Nebraska had been seized by order of the Unification Board—and Train Number 194 had carried the unplanted harvest and the future of the people of Nebraska to be consumed by the people of Illinois "In this enlightened age" Eugene Lawson had said in a radio broadcast, "we have come at last, to realize that each one of us is his brother s keeper "

"In a precarious period of emergency like the present James Taggart was saying while she looked at the map it is dangerous to find ourselves forced to miss pay days and accumulate wage arrears on some of our divisions a temporary condition, of course but—"

She chuckled. "The Railroad Unification Plan isn t working, is it, Jim?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"You re to receive a big cut of the Atlantic Southern s gross income out of the common pool at the end of the year—only there won't be any gross income left for the pool to seize will there?"

"That s not true! It s just that the bankers are sabotaging the Plan. Those bastards—who used to give us loans in the old days with no security at all except our own railroad—now refuse to let me have a few measly hundred thousands on short term just to take care of a few payrolls when I have the entire plant of all the railroads of the country to offer them as security for my loan!"

She chuckled

"We couldn t help it!" he cried "It s not the fault of t that some people refuse to carry their fair share of our b

"Jim, was this all you wanted to tell me? If it is, I'll b work to do "

His eyes shot to his wrist watch No no that s not all It s m urgent that we discuss the situation and arrive at some decis which—

She listened blankly to the next stream of generalities, wond ing about his motive He was marking time yet he wasn't fully she felt certain that he was holding her here for some spec purpose and simultaneously that he was holding her for the m sake of her presence

It was some new trait in him which she had begun to no ever since Cherryl s death He had come running to her rush unannounced into her apartment on the evening of the day w Cherryl s body had been found and the story of her suicide had b the newspapers given by some social worker who had witne it an inexplicable suicide the newspapers had called it, un to discover any motive It wasn t my fault! he had screamed her as if she were the only judge whom he had to placate not to blame for it! I m not to blame! He had been shaking terror—yet she had caught a few glances thrown shrewdly at face which had seemed inconceivably to convey a touch triumph Get out of here Jim was all she had said to him

He had never spoken to her again about Cherryl but he started coming to her office more often than usual he stopped her in the halls for snatches of pointless discuss ons—such moments had grown into a sum that gave her an incom hensible sensation as if while clinging to her for support and tection against some nameless terror h s arms were sliding to brace her and to plunge a knife into her back

I am eager to know vo r views he was saying insistently she looked away

and you have

if there were no

but—

She glanced at him sharply his eyes scurried away

"What I mean is some constructive pol cy has to be dev sed droned on hastily "Something has to be done by someb In times of emergency—

She knew what thought he had scurried to avo d what hi had given her yet did not want her to acknowledge or discuss knew that no train schedules could be maintained any longer promises kept no contracts observed that regular trains cancelled at a moment s notice and transformed into emerg

had built their power by a purposeful course projected over a of t me—were left to exist at the whim of the moment a mo could not foresee or control She knew that the best an those of the longest range and most co

ng since gone—and those still struggling to produce, struggling savagely to preserve the code of an age when production had been possible ...

line shameful to

"mitting"

ho were able to

a mystic secret,

ot to question or

... They were the men whose dealings with Cuffy Meigs were regarded by people as that unknowable of mystic creeds which hits the observer for the sin of looking so people kept their eyes

new that deals

own as "trans-

ne would dare

gency specials,

send them to

to strike with

property jus

ublic welfare"

were the men

hers and their

grapefruit in Arizona—to the relief of a factory in Florida engaged in the production of pin ball machines—to the relief of a horse farm in Kentucky—to the relief of Orren Boyle's Associated Steel

These were the men who made deals with desperate industrialists to provide transportation for the goods stalled in their warehouses—or failing to obtain the percentage demanded made deals to purchase the goods when the factory closed at the bankruptcy sale, at ten cents on the dollar, and to speed the goods away in freight cars suddenly available away to markets where dealers of the same kind were ready for the kill These were the men who hovered over factories waiting for the last breath of a furnace to pounce upon the equipment—and over desolate sidings, to pounce upon the freight cars of undelivered goods—these were a new biological species the hit and run businessmen who did not stay in any line of business longer than the span of one deal who had no payrolls to meet, no overhead to carry no real estate to own no equipment to build, whose only asset and sole investment consisted of an item known as "friendship" These were the men whom official speeches described as "the progressive businessmen of our dynamic age" but whom people called "the pull peddlers"—the species included many breeds those of "transportation pull" and of steel pull" and "oil pull" and "wage raise pull" and suspended sentence pull"—men who *were* dynamic who kept darting all over the country while no one else could move men who were active and mindless active not like animals but like that which breeds feeds and moves upon the stillness of a corpse

She knew that there was money to be had out of the railroad business and she knew who was now obtaining it Cuffy Meigs was selling trains as he was selling the last of the railroad's supplies whenever he could rig a setup which would not let it be d... proved—selling rail to roads in Guatemala or to trolley

panies in Canada, selling wire to manufacturers of juke boxes, s ing crossties for fuel in resort hotels

Did it matter—she thought, looking at the map—which part the corpse had been consumed by which type of maggot, by tho who gorged themselves or by those who gave the food to othe maggots? So long as living flesh was prey to be devoured, did i matter whose stomachs it had gone to fill? There was no way to te which devastation had been accomplished by the humanitarians an which by undisguised gangsters There was no way to tell which ac of plunder had been prompted by the charity lust of the Lawso and which by the gluttony of Cuffy Meigs—no way to tell whic communities had been immolated to feed another community or week closer to starvation and which to provide yachts for the pul peddlers Did it matter? Both were alike in fact as they were alik in spirit both were in need and need was regarded as sole title t property both were acting in strictest accordance with the sam code of morality Both held the immolation of men as proper an both were achieving it There wasn t even any way to tell who we the cannibals and who the victims—the communities that accept as their rightful due the confiscated clothing or fuel of a town i the east of them, found, next week, their granaries confiscated t feed a town to the west—men had achieved the ideal of the ce turies, they were practicing it in unobstructed perfection, they we serving *need* as their highest ruler, need as first claim upon them need as their standard of value, as the coin of their realm as mo sacred than right and life Men had been pushed into a pit wher shouting that man is his brother's keeper, each was devouring h neighbor and was being devoured by his neighbor's brother, eac was proclaiming the righteousness of the unearned and wonder who was stripping the skin off his back, each was devouring himsel while screaming in terror that some unknowable evil was destroyin the earth

'What complaint do they now have to make?' she heard Hu Akston s voice in her mind "That the universe is irrational? Is it

She sat looking at the map, her glance dispassionately solemn if no emotion save respect were permissible when observing th awesome power of logic She was seeing—in the chaos of a peris ing continent—the precise, mathematical execution of all the ide men had held They had not wanted to know that *this* was what th wanted the had not ... had the power to wa

lechers of pity?—she wondered What were they counting on Those who had once simpered "I don t want to destroy the n I only want to seize a little of their surplus to help the poor, ju a *little,* they'll never miss it!"—then, later, had snapped "Th tycoons can stand being squeezed they ve amassed enough to la them for three generations"—then, later, had yelled "Wh should the people suffer while businessmen have reserves to last year? —*now* were screaming "Why should we starve while som

le have reserves to last a week?" What were they counting -she wondered.

'ou must do something!" cried James Taggart.

ie whirled to face him "*I?*"

ts *your* job its your province, its your duty!"

Vhat is?"

'o act. To do"

'o do—what?"

How should I know? It's *your* special talent You're the doer"

he glanced at him the statement was so oddly perceptive and ncongruously irrelevant. She rose to her feet.

Is this all, Jim?"

No! No! I want a discussion!"

Go ahead."

But you havent said anything!"

You havent, either"

But What I mean is there are practical problems to solve, ich For instance what was that matter of our last alloca n of new rail vanishing from the storehouse in Pittsburgh?"

"Cuffy Meigs stole it and sold it."

"Can you prove it?" he snapped defensively

"Have your friends left any means methods rules or agencies of oof?"

"Then dont talk about it dont be theoretical we've got to deal oday I al means to r unprovable

she thought, er to protect existence to ut disturbing

"What do you find so damn funny?" he snapped angrily

"You know it."

"I don't know whats the matter with you! I dont know whats happened to you in the last two months ever since you cam [illegible]

[illegible] not [illegible] con fast enough to miss her smile "I mean I wanted to ference, I wanted to know your view of the situation—"

"You know it."

"But you haven't said a word!"

"I said everything I had to say three years ago I told you where your course would take you It has"

"Now there you go again! Whats the use of theorizing? here we're not back three years ago We've got to deal with present, not the past Maybe things would have been different, had followed maybe, but the fact is that we

and we ve got to deal with facts We ve got to take reality as is *now* today!

Well take it

"I beg your pardon?

'Take your reality I'll merely take your orders"

'That s unfair! I m asking for your opinion—"

You re asking for reassurance Jim You re not going to get i

I beg your pardon?

I m not going to help you pretend—by arguing with you—the reality you re talking about is not what it is that there s still way to make it work and to save your neck There isn t"

Well There was no explosion no anger—only the feel uncertain voice of a man on the verge of abdication "Well what would *you* want me to do?

Give up He looked at her blankly Give up—all of you, and your Washington friends and your looting planners and whole of your cannibal philosophy Give up and get out of way and let those of us who can start from scratch out the ruins

No! The explosion came oddly now it was the scream of man who would die rather than betray his idea and it came fr a man who had spent his life evading the existence of ideas act with the expediency of a criminal She wondered whether she ever understood the essence of criminals She wondered about nature of the loyalty to the idea of denying ideas

No! he cried his voice lower hoarser and more normal s ing from the tone of a zealot to the tone of an overbearing ex tive 'That s impossible! That s out of the question!

"Who said so?"

"Never mind! It s so! Why do you always think of the impractic Why don t you accept reality as it *is* and do something about You re the realist you're the doer the mover the producer Nat Taggart you re the person who s able to achieve any goal chooses! You could save us now, you could find a way to m things work—if you *wanted* to!"

She burst out laughing

There she thought was the ultimate goal of all that loose demic prattle which businessmen had ignored for years the of all the slipshod definitions the sloppy generalit es the sc abstractions all claiming that obedience to objective reality is same as obedience to the State that there is no difference betw a law of nature and a bureaucrat s directive that a hungry is not free that man must be released from the tyranny of f shelter and clothing—all of it, for years that the day might c when Nat Taggart the realist would be asked to consider the of Cuffy Meigs as a *fact* of nature irrevocable and absolute steel rails and gravitation to accept the Meigs made world a objective unchangeable reality—then to continue producing ab ance in that world *There* was the goal of all those con rary and classroom who sold their revelations as " as science, their cravings as

e savages of the ... the relative, the
a farmer gather
...omenon unbound
...ner's omnipotent
...um, who then proceed to ... the farmer ... to de-

... to

... ard
... he
... our

She drew herself up, her muscles growing rigid, as if she were

... own? Why should you be happy while I suffer? Oh yes, the
...orld is yours, you're the one who has the brains to run it Then
...hy do you permit suffering in your world? You proclaim the
...ursuit of happiness, but you doom me to frustration Don t I have
...e right to demand any form of happiness I choose? Isn't that a
...ebt which you owe me? Am I not your brother?"

His glance was like a prowler's flashlight searching her face for
...shred of pity. It found nothing but a look of revulsion.

"It's your sin if I ... brother,
... y my
... have
... re so
... t you
..., or good, so long as I m wretched My misery is the measure
...f your sin. My contentment is the measure of your virtue I *want*
...is kind of world ... sphere of authority,
... I
...ess ... that a moral absolute! Don t you know it! Don t you?
Don t you?"

His glance was now like the hands of a man hanging over an
...byss, groping frantically for the slightest fissure of doubt, but slip-
...ing on the clean, polished rock of her face.

"You bastard," she said evenly, without emotion, since the words
...ere not addressed to anything human.

It seemed to her that she saw him fall into the abyss—even
...hough there was nothing to see in his face except the look of a
...on man whose trick has not worked.

There was no reason to feel more revulsion than usual,
...hought, he had merely uttered the things which were ...

heard and accepted everywhere but this creed was usually pounded in the third person and Jim had had the open effront to expound it in the first She wondered whether people accep the doctrine of sacrifice provided its recipients did not identify nature of their own claims and actions

She turned to leave

No No! Wait! he cried leaping to his feet, with a glance his wrist watch It s time now! There s a particular news bro cast that I want you to hear!

She stopped held by curiosity

He pressed the switch of the radio watching her face ope intently almost insolently His eyes had a look of fear and oddly lecherous anticipation

Ladies and gentlemen " the voice of the radio speaker lea forth abruptly it had a tone of panic News of a shocking velopment has just reached us from Santiago Chile!"

She saw the jerk of Taggart s head and a sudden anxiety in bewildered frown as if something about the words and voice w not what he had expected

A special session of the legislature of the People s State of Ch had been called for ten o clock this morning to pass an act utmost importance to the people of Chile Argentina and other Sou American People s States In line with the enlightened pol cy Senor Ramirez the new Head of the Chilean State—who came power on the moral slogan that man is his brother s keeper— legislature was to nationalize the Chilean properties of d Ancon Copper thus opening the way for the People s State of Argenti to nationalize the rest of the d Anconia properties the world ov This however was known only to a very few of the top-lev leaders of both nations The measure had been kept secret in ord to avoid debate and reactionary opposition The seizure of the mul billion dollar d Anconia Copper was to come as a munificent su prise to the country

"On the stroke of ten in the exact moment when the chairma gavel struck the rostrum opening the session—almost as if t gavel s blow had set it off—the sound of a tremendous explosi rocked the hall shattering the glass of its windows It came fro the harbor a few streets away—and when the legislators rushed t the windows they saw a long column of flame where once the had risen the familiar silhouettes of the ore docks of d Ancon Copper The ore docks had been blown to bits

"The chairman averted panic and called the session to order Th act of nationalization was read to the assembly to the sound o fire alarm sirens and distant cries It was a gray morning dark wi rain clouds the explosion had broken an electric transmitter—s that the assembly voted on the measure by the light of candles wh le the red glow of the fire kept sweeping over the great vau' o ceiling above their heads

"But more terrible a shock came later lators calle hasty recess to announce to the natio that th ple now owned d Anconia Copper W wor

e that
emen,
an in
nconia

ppei on the face of the globe, from Chile to Siam to Spain to ottsville, Montana, had been blown up and swept away

"The d Anconia workers everywhere had been handed their last y checks in cash, at nine A M, and by nine thirty had been moved f the premises The ore docks, the smelters, the laboratories, the fice buildings were demolished Nothing was left of the d'Anconia

...

dicate had continued to be run, even though exhausted years ago

"Among the thousands of d'Anconia employees, the police have ound no one with a ... plot had een conceived, orga ... Anconia staff are r ... executives, mineralog ... —all the men upon ... carry on the work ... most able—*correction* the most selfish—of the men ... ports from the various banks indicate that there are no d Anconia accounts left anywhere, the money has been spent down to the last penny

"Ladies and gentlemen, the d'Anconia fortune—the greatest fortune on earth the legendary fortune of the centuries—has ceased to exist In place of the golden dawn of a new age the People's States of Chile and Argentina are left with a pile of rubble and hordes of unemployed on their hands

"No clue has been found to the fate or the whereabouts of Señor Francisco d Anconia He has vanished, leaving nothing behind him, not even a message of farewell

Thank you, my darling—thank you in the name of the last of us, even if you will not hear it and will not care to hear It was not a sentence, but the silent emotion of a prayer in her mind addressed to the laughing face of a boy she had known at sixteen

Then she noticed that she was clinging to the radio as if the faint electric beat within it still held a tie to the only living force on earth which it had transmitted for a few brief moments and which now filled the room where all else was dead

As distant remnants of the explosion s wreckage she noticed a sound that came from Jim, part moan part-scream, part growl—then the ... over a telephone and his ... said it was safe! ... d sunk into it?" ... d his voice snar ... ie first, "Shut ... e, God

There were people rushing into the office, the telephones screaming and alternating between pleas and curses, Jim yelling into one receiver, "Get me Santiago! Get Washn to get me Santiago!"

field under the lens of a microscope She wondered how they ever expect to be taken seriously when a Francisco d Anconia possible on earth

She saw the glare of the explosion in every face she met thr the rest of the day—and in every face she passed in the darkne the streets, that evening If Francisco had wanted a wo funeral pyre for d Anconia Copper, she thought, he had succee There it was, in the streets of New York City, the only city earth still able to understand it—in the faces of people in whispers, the whispers crackling tensely like small tongues fire, the faces lighted by a look that was both solemn frantic the shadings of expressions appearing to sway and we as if cast by a distant flame, some frightened, some angry, mos them uneasy, uncertain expectant, but all of them acknowledg fact much beyond an industrial catastrophe, all of them kno what it meant, though none would name its meaning all of carrying a touch of laughter, a laughter of amusement and defi the bitter laughter of perishing victims who feel that they avenged

She saw it in the face of Hank Rearden, when she met him dinner that evening As his tall, confident figure walked toward —the only figure that seemed at home in the costly setting distinguished restaurant—she saw the look of eagerness fighting sternness of his features, the look of a young boy still open to enchantment of the unexpected He did not speak of this d event, but she knew that it was the only image in his mind

They had been meeting whenever he came to the city, spendi brief, rare evening together—with their past still alive in their s acknowledgment—with no future in their work and in their com struggle, but with the knowledge that they were allies gaining port from the fact of each other's existence

He did not want to mention todays event, he did not wan [illegible] at the table that his che [illegible] voice his c

didn't he?"

"His *oath?* she asked, startled, thinking of the inscription on temple of Atlantis

"He said to me, 'I swear—by the [illegible] I am friend' He was

"He is"

his head. "I have no right have

ight to accept what he's done as an act in my defense And
et " He stopped

"But it was, Hank In defense of all of us—and of you, most of
all."

a[illegible] enormous screen, eerily close and large, flooded by the
dead white glow of light projected through an empty film, empty

saying in-
mills—for
ny of their
y know it,
... they don't bother keeping track of legality any longer, I'm
sure I'm a law breaker on five or six counts, which nobody could
prove or disprove—all I know is that the gangster of the moment
told me to go full steam ahead" He shrugged "When another
gangster kicks him out tomorrow, I'll probably be shut down, as
penalty for illegal operation. But according to the plan of the
... fetal,

were
e her
ublic
air of
own
... precepts, awe in the presence of two persons who dared to be
certain of being right People were looking at them with anxious
curiosity, with envy, with respect, with the fear of offending an
unknown proudly rigorous standard some almost with an air of
apology that seemed to say "Please forgive us for being married'
There were some who had a look of angry malice, and a few who
had a look of admiration

"Dagny," he asked suddenly, "do you suppose he's in New
York?"

"No I've called the Wayne Falkland They told me that the lease
on his suite had expired a month ago and he did not renew it"

"They're looking for him all over the world," he said smiling
"They'll never find him" The smile vanished "Neither will I" His
voice slipped back to the flat gray tone of duty "Well, the mills
are working ... but running around the
countr... ... raw
materi... ore or
coal o... any raw
materi... an ...
quotas they give me could produce They don't care ...
"They think I do"

"Tired, Hank?"

"Bored to death"

There was a time, she thought, when his mind, his energy [illegible] inexhaustible resourcefulness had been given to the task of a pr[illegible] ducer devising better ways to deal with nature, *now*, they we[illegible] switched to the task of a criminal outwitting men She wonder[illegible] how long a man could endure a change of that kind.

'It's becoming almost impossible to get iron ore," he said [illegible] differently, then added, his voice suddenly alive, 'Now it's go[illegible] to be completely impossible to get copper" He was grinning

She wondered how long a man could continue to work agai[illegible] himself, to work when his deepest desire was not to succeed, but fail

She understood the connection of his thoughts when he said, "I[illegible] never told you, but I've met Ragnar Danneskjold"

"He told me"

What? Where did you ever—" He stopped "Of course," he sa[illegible] his voice tense and low He would be one of them You wou[illegible] have met him Dagny, what are they like, those men who [illegible] No Don't answer me ' In a moment he added, "So I've met one [illegible] their agents"

You've met two of them"

His response was a span of total stillness" Of course" he sa[illegible] dull [illegible]

"([illegible]

H [illegible]

night [illegible] when they got Ken Danagger . . . I thought that th[illegible] had not sent anyone after *me* [illegible]."

The effort by which he made his face grow rigid, was almost li[illegible] the slow, resisted turn of a key locking a sunlit room he could n[illegible] permit himself to examine After a while, he said impassive[illegible] "Dagny, that new rail we discussed last month—I don't think I[illegible] be able to deliver it They haven't lifted their regulations off m[illegible] output, they're still controlling my sales and disposing of my Met[illegible] as they please But the bookkeeping is in such a snarl that I'[illegible] smuggling a few thousand tons into the black market every wee[illegible] I think they know it They're pretending not to They don't wa[illegible] to antagonize me, right now But, you see, I've been shipping eve[illegible] ton I could snatch, to some emergency customers of mine Dagn[illegible] I was in Minnesota last month I've seen what's going on ther[illegible] The country will starve, not next year, but *this* winter, unless [illegible] few of us act and act fast. There are no grain reserves left an[illegible] where With Nebraska gone, Oklahoma wrecked, North Dako[illegible] abandoned, Kansas barely subsisting—there isn't going to be st[illegible] wheat this winter, not for the city of New York nor for a[illegible] Eastern city Minnesota is our last granary They've had two ba[illegible] years in succession, but they have a bumper crop this fall—an[illegible] they have to be able to harvest it. Have [illegible] chance to take [illegible] look at the condition of the farm-equ[illegible] ? They're m[illegible] " enough, any of them, to keep a [illegible] gangsters [illegible]

Washington or to pay percentages to pull peddlers So they haven t
been getting many allocations of materials Two-thirds of them
have shut down and the rest are about to And farms are perishing
all over the country—for lack of tools You should have seen
those farmers in Minnesota They've been spending more time
fixing old tractors that can't be fixed than plowing their fields I
don't know how they managed to survive till last spring I don't
know how they managed to plant their wheat. But they did They
did." There was a look of intensity on his face, as if he were contemplating a rare, forgotten sight a vision of *men*—and she knew
that motive was still holding him to his job "Dagny, they had to
have tools for their harvest. I've been selling all the Metal I could
steal out of my own mills to the manufacturers of farm equipment.
On credit.

...

learning unopposed, through the holes of its windows and the
cracks of its roof, with the remnant of a sign Ward Harvester
Company

"Oh, I know," he said "We'll save them this winter but the looters will devour them next year Still, we'll save them this winter

...

no food! What is the use, anyway?"

"It's all right, Hank. We'll last with such rail as we have, for—"
she stopped

"For a month?"

"For the winter—I hope"

Cutting across their silence a shrill voice reached them from an-

...

, but now, at this moment.'

"What would you do, if you knew it?"

He dropped his hand in a gesture of futility "I wouldn't
approach him. The only homage I can still pay him is not to cry
forgiveness where no forgiveness is possible."

They remained silent. They listened to the voices
the splinter... ...ic trickling through the luxurious

She had not been aware that the same presence seemed to be an invisible guest at every table, that the same subject kept breaking through the attempts at any other conversation People sat in a manner, not quite of cringing, but as if they found the room too large and too exposed—a room of glass, blue velvet, aluminum and gentle lighting They looked as if they had come to this room at the price of countless evasions, to let it help them pretend that there was still a civilized existence—but an act of primeval violence had blasted the nature of their world into the open and they were no longer able not to see

'How could he? How could he?" a woman was demanding with petulant terror He had no *right* to do it!"

"It was an accident," said a young man with a staccato voice and an odor of public payroll "It was a chain of coincidences, as any statistical curve of probabilities can easily prove It is unpatriotic to spread rumors exaggerating the power of the people's enemies"

'Right and wrong is all very well for academic conversations" said a woman with a schoolroom voice and a barroom mouth "but how can on...

...tality, after centuries of teaching, training and indoctrination with the gentle and the humane!'

A woman's bewildered voice rose uncertainly and trailed off "I thought we were living in an age of brotherhood . . ."

"I'm scared," a young girl was repeating, 'I'm scared . . . oh, I don't know! I'm just scared "

"He couldn't have done it!" . "He did!" . . "But why?" . . "I refuse to believe it!" . . "It's not human!" . . . "But why?' "Just a worthless playboy!' . "But why?"

The muffled scream of a woman across the room and some half grasped signal on the edge of Dagny's vision, came simultaneously and made her whirl to look at the city

The calendar was run by a mechanism locked in a room behind the screen, unrolling the same film year after year, projecting the dates in steady rotation, in changeless rhythm, never moving but on the stroke of midnight The speed of Dagny's turn gave her time to see a phenomenon as unexpected as if a planet had reversed its orbit in the sky she saw the words "September 2' moving upward and vanishing past the edge of the screen

Then, written across the enormous page, stopping time, as a last message to the world and to the world's motor which was New York, she saw the lines of a sharp, intransigent handwriting

Brother, you asked for it!

Francisco Domingo Carlos Andres Sebastián d'Anconia

She did not know which shock was greater the sight of the message or the sound of Rearden's laughter—Rearden, standing on his f..., in full sight and hearing of the room behind him, laughing ...ve their moans of panic, laughing in greeting , in sa...

:eptance of the gift he had tried to reject, in release, in triumph, in urrender

* *

On ... Montana,
iggart

nights
drop
to the
sk of
loading a train, it stopped abruptly and hung still against the evening sky, between a string of empty cars and piles of suddenly immovable ore.

The men of the ... stopped in dazed be
equip-
gauges,
es of a
topped,
like men ... horsepower

brusque

Minnesota, Eddie," said Dagny grimly, closing the drawer of her special file "Tell the Minnesota Division to ship half their stock of wire to Montana." "But good God, Dagny!—with the peak of the harvest rush approaching—" "They'll hold through it—I think We don't dare lose a single supplier of copper "

"But I have!" screamed James Taggart, when she reminded him once more "I have obtained for you the top priority on copper wire the first claim the uppermost ration level I've given you all the cards certificates, documents and requisitions—what else do you want?' "The copper wire." I've done all I could! Nobody can blame me!"

... on his desk
ergency
e state's
orpora-
d com-
tion's gross income ahead of other taxes, the Califo...
panies had gone out of business

... voice over a long-
wanted to assure
..." asked Rearden.
California We'll
straighten it out in no time, it was an act of ... egal insurrection, their state government had no right to impose local taxes det... mental to national taxes, we'll negotiate an equitable ... immediately—but in the meantime, if you have been ...

any unpatriotic rumors about the California
wanted to tell you that Rearden Steel has b
category of essential need with first claim
anywhere in the nation very top category
just wanted you to know that you won t
problem of fuel this winter!

Rearden hung up the telephone receiver
not about the problem of fuel and the c
fields—disasters of this kind had become
fact that the Washington planners found
This was new he wondered what it meant
struggle he had learned that an apparer
was not hard to deal with but an apparentl
an ugly danger The same wonder struck l
down an alley between the mill structur
slouching figure whose posture combined
an air of expecting to be swatted it was

Ever since he had moved to Philadelphia
his former home and had not heard a wor
bills he went on paying Then, inexplicab
weeks he had caught Philip wandering t
apparent reason He had been unable to
sneaking to avoid him or waiting to ca
looked like both He had been unable to di
purpose only some incomprehensible sol
had never displayed before

The first time in answer to his startl
here? —Philip had said vaguely Well
like me to come to your office What do
but well Mother is worried a
call me any time she wishes" Philip had
proceeded to question h m in an uncon
about his work his health his business
hitting oddly beside the point not quest
more about his Rearden s feelings towa
cut him short and waved him away bu
small nagging sense of an incident that re

The second time Philip had said as s
want to know how you feel" "Who s we?
I These are d fficult times and well
how you feel about it all "Tell her that
seemed to hit Philip in some peculiar man
the one answer he dreaded "Get out of he
wearily "and the next time you want to
ment and come to my office But don t co
thing to say Th s is not a place where or
or anybody else s"

Phil p had not called for an appointme
again slouching among the giant shapes
a r of guilt and snobbishness together, as
slumming

"I wasn't born owning a steel plant."

"Was I?"

"I can do anything you can—if you'll teach me"

"Who taught me?"

"Why do you keep saying that? I'm not talking about you!"

"I am"

In a moment, Philip muttered, "What do *you* have to wo... about? It's not *your* livelihood that's in question!"

Rearden pointed to the figures of men in the steaming rays of th furnace "Can you do what they're doing?"

"I don't see what you're—"

"What will happen if I put you there and you ruin a heat of stee for me?"

"What's more important, that your damn steel gets poured o that I eat?"

"How do you propose to eat if the steel doesn't get poured?"

Philip's face assumed a look of reproach "I'm not in a position to argue with you right now, since you hold the upper hand."

"Then don't argue"

"Uh?"

"Keep your mouth shut and get out of here"

"But I meant—' He stopped

Rearden chuckled "You meant that it's I who should keep m mou th sh t beca se I hold the pper hand and should give in t

ncıple"

n't it?"

"We're discussing a job in a steel plant—and, boy! is that a materialistic place!"

Philip's body drew a shade tighter together and his eyes became a shade more glazed, as if in fear of the place around him, in re sentment of its sight, in an effort not to concede its reality He said in the soft, stubborn whine of a voodoo incantation, "It's a moral imperative, universally conceded in our day and age, that every man is entitled to a job" His voice rose "I'm entitled to it!"

"You are? Go on, then, collect your claim."

"Uh?"

"Collect your job Pick it off the bush where you think it grows."

"I mean—"

"You mean that it doesn't? You mean that you need it, but can't create it? You mean that you're entitled to a job which *I* must create for you?"

"Yes!"

"And if I don't?"

The silence went stretching through second after second "I don't understand you," said Philip, his voice had the angry bewilderment of a man who recites the formulas of a well tes ... but keeps getting the wrong cues in answer "I don't ... why one can't talk to you any more I don't ... theory ...re propounding and—"

yes you do"

f refus ng to believe that the formu1as could fail Philip burst th "Since when did *you* take to abstract philosophy? You re businessman you re not qualified to deal with questions of le, you ought to leave it to the experts who have conceded nturies—"

t it, Philip What s the gimmick?"

mmick?'

y the sudden ambition?"

ll at a time like this . "

e what?"

ll every man has the right to have some means of support and not be left to be tossed aside When things are ertain, a man s got to have some security some foothold mean, at a time like this, if anything happened to you, I d o—"

hat do you expect to happen to me?"

I don t! I don t!" The cry was oddly, incomprehensibly e. "I don't expect anything to happen! Do you?"

ch as what?"

w do I know? But I've got nothing except the pittance ve me and and you might change your mind any time"

might."

nd I haven t any hold on you at all."

hy did it take you that many years to realize it and start ing? Why now?

ecause because you've changed You you used to a sense of duty and moral responsibility but you re it. You re losing it, aren t you?"

arden stood studying him silently there was something peculiar il p s manner of sliding toward questions as if his words were ental but the too casual, the faintly insistent questions were ey to his purpose

ell, I'll be glad to take the burden off your shoulders if I m den to you! Philip snapped suddenly "Just give me a job and conscience won't have to bother you about me any longer!"

doesn't."

hat s what I mean! You don t care You don t care what be- s of any of us, do you?"

f whom?"

Vhy Mother and me and and mankind in general. I m no t to yo r better self I know that you re

. so—"

you re worried about If

ash not for a job not—"

ediate and almost frantic

nt a job!"

Do you hear

Pull yourself together, yo get se

re saying?"

hilip spit his answer with p fect hatred "You

me that

Can *you?*"

I only—

"To buy you off? Why should I try to buy you off—instead kicking you out as I should have years ago?

"Well after all I m your brother!

"What is that supposed to mean?"

"One s supposed to have some sort of feeling for one s brothe

"Do *you?*

Philip s mouth swelled petulantly he did not answer he wait Rearden let him wait Philip muttered, You re supposed least to have some consideration for my feelings you haven t "

Have *you* for mine?

"Yours? Your *feelings?*" It was not malice in Philip s voice, worse it was a genuine ind gnant astonishment You haven't a feelings You've never felt anything at all You've never *suffere*

It was as if a sum of years hit Rearden in the face by means o sensation and a sight the exact sensation of what he had felt in cab of the first train s engine on the John Galt Line—and the of Philip s eyes the pale half liquid eyes presenting the utterm of human degradation an uncontested pain and with the obsce insolence of a skeleton toward a living being demanding that pain be held as the highest of values You've never suffered eyes were saying to him accusingly—while he was seeing the n in his office when his ore mines were taken away from him— moment when he had signed the Gift Certificate surrender Rearden Metal—the month of days inside a plane that searched the remains of Dagny s body You've never suffered the eyes w saying with self righteous scorn—while he remembered the sen tion of proud chastity with which he had fought through th moments refusing to surrender to pain, a sensation made of love of his loyalty of his knowledge that joy is the goal of ex ence and joy is not to be stumbled upon, but to be achieved, a the act of treason is to let its vision drown in the swamp of moment s torture You ve never suffered the dead stare of the e was saying you've never felt anything because only to suffer i feel—there s no such thing as joy there s only pain and the abse of pain only pain and the zero when one feels nothing—I suff I m twisted by suffering I m made of undiluted suffering that's purity that s my virtue—and yours you the untwisted one you uncomplain ng yours is to relieve me of my pain—cut your suffering body to patch up mine cut your unfeeling soul to s mine from feeling—and we'll achieve the ultimate ideal the umph over l fe the zero! He was seeing the nature of those w for centuries had not recoiled from the preachers of annihilation he was see ng the nature of the enemies he had been fighting all l fe

"Ph lip" he said "get out of here" His voice was l'ke a ray sunl ght in a morgue it was the plain dry daily voice of a busine in the sound of health addressed to an enemy one could by anger nor even by horror "And don't ever try to en

mills . . . ry gate to

s tone of a
a job here

to look at

is moment of grasping a sudden revelation was not accom
by means of thought, but by means of that dark sensation
was his only mode of consciousness he felt a sensation of
squeezing his throat, shivering down into his stomach—he
ing the spread of the mills, with the roving streamers of
with the ladles of molten metal sailing through space on deli
tles with open pits the color of glowing coal with cranes
at his head pounding past holding tons of steel by the
power of magnets—and he knew that he was afraid of this
afraid to the death, that he dared not move without the
on and guidance of the man before him—then he looked at
straight figure standing casually still the figure with the un
g eyes whose sight had cut through rock and flame to build
—and then he knew how easily the man he was proposing
pel could let a single bucket of metal tilt over a second
of its time or let a single crane drop its load a foot short
oal, and there would be nothing left of him of Philip the
—and his only protection lay in the fact that his mind
hink of such actions, but the mind of Hank Rearden would

we d better keep it on a friendly basis " said Philip
d better said Rearden and walked away
who worship pain—thought Rearden, staring at the image of
nies he had never been able to understand—they re men
rship pain It seemed monstrous yet peculiarly devoid of
nce He felt nothing It was like trying to summon emotion
inanimate objects toward refuse sliding down a mountain
crush him. One could flee from the slide or build retaining
ainst it or be crushed—but one could not grant any anger,
ion or moral concern to the senseless motions of the un
worse he thought—the anti living
ame sense of detached unconcern remained with him while
a Philadelphia courtroom and watched men perform the
which were to grant him his divorce He watched them
echanical generalities recite vague phrases of fraudulent
play an intricate game of stretching words to convey no
no meaning. He had paid them to do it—he whom the
nitted no other way to gain his freedom no right to state
and plead the truth—the law which delivered his fate not
tive rules objectively defined but to the arbitrary mercy of

nade
throu
ney

its reason no other reason had existed for years where no stand save whim had existed They seemed to regard it as heir rig

questions of right and wrong were irrelevant and they the charge of dispensing justice were safely wise enough to know no justice existed They acted like savages performing a r devised to set them free of objective reality

But the ten years of his marriage had been real, he thought— *these* were the men who assumed the power to dispose of it to

sharing a common guilt mutually safe from moral condem Then when they observed that he was the only man in the r who looked steadily straight at anyone s face he saw resentm growing in their eyes Incredulously, he realized what it was had been expected of him he, the victim chained bound gag and left with no recourse save to bribery, had been expected believe that the farce he had purchased was a process of law the edicts enslaving him had moral validity, that he was guil corrupting the integrity of the guardians of justice and that blame was his not theirs It was like blaming the victim of a hol for corrupting the integrity of the thug And yet—he thoug through all the generations of political extortion it was not looting bureaucrats who had taken the blame but the chai industrialists not the men who peddled legal favors but the who were forced to buy them and through all those generation crusades against corruption the remedy had always been not liberating of the victims but the granting of wider powers extortion to the extortionists The only guilt of the victims, thought had been that they accepted it as guilt

When he walked out of the courtroom into the chilly drizzle gray afternoon he felt as if he had been divorced not only f Lillian but from the whole of the human society that supported procedure he had witnessed

The face of his attorney an elderly man of the old fash school wore an expression that made it look as if he longed take a bath "Say Hank " he asked as sole comment "is th something the looters are anxious to get from you right now?" that I know of Why? "The thing went too smoothly There a few points at which I expected pressure and hints for some ex but the boys sailed past and took no advantage of it Looks to as if orders had come from on high to treat you gently and let have your way Are they planning something against your mi

t that I know of," said Rearden—and was astonished to hear it s mind Not that I care
was on the same afternoon, at the mills, that he saw the Wet se hurrying toward him—a gangling, coltish figure with a iar mixture of brusqueness, awkwardness and decisiveness
Mr Rearden I would like to speak to you." His voice was diffi-, yet oddly firm.
Go ahead."
There's something I want to ask you" The boy's face was im and taut. "I want you to know that I know you should se me but I want to ask it just the same and and if presumptuous then just tell me to go to hell."
Okay Try it."
Mr Rearden, would you give me a job?" It was the effort to d normal that betrayed the days of struggle behind the question. ant to quit what I'm doing and go to work. I mean real work—teel making like I thought I'd started to, once I want to earn keep I'm tired of being a bedbug"
earden could not resist smiling and reminding him, in the tone quotation "Now why use such words Non Absolute? If we t use ugly words we won't have any ugliness and—" But he the desperate earnestness of the boy's face and stopped, his le vanishing
I mean it, Mr Rearden. And I know what the word means and the right word I'm tired of being paid with your money, to do ning except make it impossible for you to make any money d. I know that anyone who works today is only a sucker for tards I
hat's
or par
ment, he went on in his woodenly unemotional tone get out of the Deputy Director-of Distribution racket I don't w that I'd be of much use to you I've got a college diploma in tallorgy but that's not worth the paper it's printed on But I ... I've been man or deputy ... this ... not

a manner of evasion but as if he had ...
"Why were you afraid to ask me?" said Rearden gently
The boy glanced at him with indignant astonishment as if the swer were self-evident "Because after the way I started here and e way I acted and what I'm deputy of if I come asking you for fors you ought to kick me in the teeth!"
"You have learned a great deal in the two years you've been re"
"No I—" He glanced at Rearden understood looked away id woodenly "Yeah if that's what you mean"
"Listen kid I'd give you a job this minute and I'd trust ore than a s job, if it were up to me But h...

gotten the Unification Board? I m not allowed to hire you and yo not allowed to quit Sure men are quitting all the time and s hiring others under phony names and fancy papers proving they ve worked here for years You know it and thanks for kee your mouth shut But do you think that if I hired you that your friends in Washington would miss it?

The boy shook his head slowly

Do you think that if you quit their service to become a swee they wouldn t understand your reason?

The boy nodded

"Would they let you go?

The boy shook his head After a moment he said in a tone forlorn astonishment r t Mr Rear I forgot them I kept and that the only thin

I know

"And it *is* the only thing that counts in fact"

Yes Non Absolute *in fact*

The boy s mouth jerked suddenly into the brief mirthless twis a smile I guess I m tied worse than any sucker "

"Yes There s nothing you can do now except apply to the U fication Board for permission to change your job I ll support y application if you want to try—only I don t think they'll grant I don t think they ll let you work for me"

"No They won t

"If you maneuver enough and lie enough they might permit to transfer to a private job—with some other steel company"

"No I don t want to go anywhere else! I don t want to leave place! He stood looking off at the invisible vapor of rain ove flame of the furnaces After a while he said quietly "I d be stay put I guess I d better go on being a deputy looter Bes des I left God only knows what sort of bastard they d saddle you w in my place! He turned They re up to something Mr Reard I don t know what it is but they re getting ready to spring som thing on you

What?"

I don't know But they've been watching every opening here the last few weeks every desertion and slipping their own gang A queer sort of gang too—real goons some of them that I d swe never stepped inside a steel plant before I've had orders to get many of our boys in as possible They wouldn t tell me why don t know what it is they re planning I ve tried to pump them t they re acting pretty cagey about it I don t think they trust any more I m losing the right touch I guess All I know is they getting set to pull something here

"Thanks for warning me

"I'll try to get the dope on it I'll try my damndest to get it time" He turned brusquely and st rted off but stopped "M Rearden if it were up to you you would have hired me?"

"I would have, gladly and *at once*

hank you Mr Rearden," he said his voice solemn and low, walked away

earden stood looking after him seeing with a tearing smile of what it was that the ex relativist the ex pragmatist the ex ralist was carrying away with him for consolation.

* *

n the afternoon of September 11, a copper wire broke in Minne-

[illegible]

n who had lived through two years of disaster for the triumphant ward of this autumn s giant harvest men who had patched their cks and carts with wire blankets ropes and sleepless nights to ke them hold together for this one more journey to carry the un and collapse at destination but to give their owners a chance survival

Every year at this season another movement had gone clicking ross the country drawing freight cars from all corners of the ntinent to the Minnesota Division of Taggart Transcontinental, e beat of train wheels preceding the creak of the wagons like an vance echo rigorously planned ordered and timed to meet the ood. The Minnesota Division drowsed through the year to come violent life for the sounds of the harvest fourteen thousand eight cars had jammed its yards each year fifteen thousand were spected this time The first of the wheat trains had started to chan el the flood into the hungry flour mills then bakeries then stom chs of the nation—but every train car and storage elevator

[illegible] to spare ough the cards e cards by her the file "Phone ir stock of wire

er desk a tele ing them of the r ordered gov

[illegible] e which, due to the cri [illegible] ernment agents to seize all copper mines and operate them as a public utility "Well" she said dropp ng the telegram into the wastebasket, "that s the end of Montana"

She said nothing when James Taggart announced to her that he was issuing an order to discontinue all d ning cars on Taggart trains "We can t afford it any longer" he explained "we ve alw lost money on those goddamn diners, and when there's no [illegible] yet, when resta urants are closing because they can t grab hol pound of [illegible] anywhere how can railroads be [illegible]

do it? Why in hell should we have to feed the passengers, anyw[illegible] They're lucky if we give them transportation, they'd travel in ca[illegible] cars if necessary, let 'em pack their own box lunches, what do [illegible] care?—they ve got no other trains to take!"

The telephone on her desk had become, not a voice of busin[illegible] but an alarm siren for the desperate appeals of disaster "Miss T[illegible] gart, we have no copper wire!' "Nails, Miss Taggart, plain n[illegible] could you tell somebody to send us a keg of nails?' "Can you f[illegible] any paint Miss Taggart, any sort of waterproof paint anywhere?[illegible]

But thirty million dollars of subsidy money from Washington [illegible] been plowed into Project Soybean—an enormous acreage in L[illegible] siana, where a harvest of soybeans was ripening, as advocated [illegible] organized by Emma Chalmers, for the purpose of recondition[illegible] the dietary habits of the nation Emma Chalmers, better known [illegible] Kip's Ma, was an old sociologist who had hung about Washing[illegible] for years, as other women of her age and type hang about [illegible] rooms For some reason which nobody could define, the death [illegible] her son in the tunnel catastrophe had given her in Washington [illegible] aura of martyrdom, heightened by her recent conversion to B[illegible] dhism "The soybean is a much more sturdy, nutritious and [illegible] nomical plant than all the extravagant foods which our waste[illegible] self indulgent diet has conditioned us to expect," Kip's Ma had [illegible] over the radio, her voice always sounded as if it were falling [illegible] drops, not of water, but of mayonnaise "Soybeans make an ex[illegible] lent substitute for bread, meat, cereals and coffee—and if al[illegible] us were compelled to adopt soybeans as our staple diet, it wo[illegible] solve the national food crisis and make it possible to feed m[illegible] people The greatest food for the greatest number—that's my [illegible] gan At a time of desperate public need, it's our duty to sacr[illegible] our luxurious tastes and eat our way back to prosperity by adap[illegible] ourselves to the simple, wholesome foodstuff on which the peo[illegible] of the Orient have so nobly subsisted for centuries There's a g[illegible] deal that we could learn from the [illegible] of the Orient"

" [illegible] r tal[illegible]
for [illegible] lephe[illegible]
"R[illegible] "L[illegible]
bulbs, Miss Taggart, there's no electric light bulbs to be had [illegible] where within two hundred miles of us!"

But five million dollars was being spent by the office of Mo[illegible] Conditioning on the People's Opera Company, which trav[illegible] thro[illegible] [illegible] who on[illegible]

[illegible]

cigarettes in th[illegible]

industrialist traveling to save his factory was not considered as
...licly needed and could not get aboard a plane; an official travel-
to collect taxes ...

... to be completed in ten years
The trouble with our modern world," Dr Robert Stadler said
... the radio, at the ceremonies launching the construction of the
...otron, "is that too many people think too much It is the cause of
our current fears and doubts An enlightened citizenry should
...ndon the ...

... Only experts are able to understand the discoveries of
...dern science, which have proved that thought is an illusion and
...t the mind is a myth"
"This age of misery is God's punishment to man for the sin of
...ying on his mind!" snarled the triumphant voices of mystics of
...ery sect and sort, on street corners, in rain soaked tents, in
...mbling temples "This world ordeal is the result of man's attempt
... live by reason! This is where thinking, logic and science have
...ought you! And ...
...r mc...
...th, fa...
And ...
...e heir and collector—Cuffy Meigs, the man impervious to thought.
...uffy Meigs strode through the offices of Taggart Transcontinental,
...earing a semi military tunic and slapping a shiny leather briefcase
...ainst his shiny leather leggings He carried an automatic pistol
... one pocket and a rabbit's foot in the other
Cuffy Meigs tried to avoid her; his manner was part scorn, as if he
...nsidered her ... as if
...e po...
...t to...
... a r...
...allenge There was a touch of impatient resentment in his man-
...r toward Jim, as if it were Jim's duty to deal with her and to
...otect him ... keep the railroad in running
...ature,
laster
blank

It was blank on the afternoon of September 14, when the phone rang in her office A man from Minnesota,' said the vo her secretary

She had told her secretary that she would accept all calls of kind They were the app
mation At a time whe
nothing but sounds des
of nameless men were h
reason and tortured honesty flashing briefly through the mu Taggart track

"Miss Taggart it is not my place to call you but nobody will said the voice that came on the wire this time the sounded young and too calm "In another day or two, a disa going to happen here the like of which they've never seen and won t be able to hide it any longer, only it will be too late by and maybe it s too late already"

"What is it? Who are you?'

"One of your employees of the Minnesota Division Miss Tag In another day or two the trains will stop running out of here— you know what that means, at the height of the harvest At height of the biggest harvest we ve ever had They'll stop, bec we have no cars The harvest freight cars have not been sent this year

"What did you say? She felt as if minutes went by betwee words of the unnatural voice that did not sound like her own

"The cars have not been sent Fifteen thousand should have here by now As far as I could learn about eight thousand ca all we got. I ve been calling Division Headquarters for a They've been telling me not to worry Last time, they told m mind my own damn business Every shed, silo, elevator wareh garage and dance hall along the track is filled with wheat. A

[illegible]

by the way they answer They know, and not one of them wa

[illegible]

that somebody had to tell you"

"I " She made an effort to breathe "I see . Who are y

"The name wouldn't matter When I hang up I will have beco deserter I don't want to stay here to see it when it happens. I

the ... , only there

last twenty
gle constant
[illegible] had made them possible—by the soft, loose faces of men who [illegible]ught to hide from themselves that they knew the answers to the [qu]estions she asked.

From the moment when she was told that the manager of the Car [Se]rvice Department had been out of town for a week and had left [no] address where one could reach him—she knew that the report of [th]e man from Minnesota was true Then came the faces of the assist[an]ts in the Car Service Department, who would neither confirm the [re]port nor deny it, but kept showing her papers orders, forms, file [illegible] connection to [illegible] "Form [illegible] office of [illegible] he comp- [illegible] t to Min- [illegible] iber have [illegible] nnesota?" [illegible] ite, classi-[fica]tion and—" "Do you know whether the cars were [se]nt to Min[ne]sota?" "As to the interstate motion of freight cars, I would have [to] refer you to the files of Mr Benson and of—"

There was nothing to learn from the files There were careful [illegible] meanings with references which [illegible] which was missing [illegible] er that the cars had [illegible] ad come from Cuffy [illegible] d tangled the trail, [illegible]—but who had carried [illegible] [wh]at steps had been taken by what compliant men to preserve the [ap]pearance of a safely normal operation without a single cry of [pro]test to arouse some braver man's attention who had falsified the [rep]orts, and where the cars had gone—seemed, at first, impossible [to] learn.

Through the hours of that night—while a small desperate crew [un]der the command of Eddie Willers kept calling every division [poi]nt, every yard depot station spur and siding of Taggart Trans[conti]nental [illegible]

from face to coward s face the destination of the freight cars th
had vanished

She went from railroad executives to wealthy shippers to Wash ington officials and back to the railroad—by cab by phone, by wi —pursuing a [illegible] The tra[illegible] approached its en when she he [illegible] in a Washin [illegible] "Well after [illegible] to a nation s welfare—there are those of more progressive view who feel that the soybean is perhaps of far greater value"—an then by noon she stood in the middle of her office knowing that th freight cars intended for the wheat of Minnesota had been sent, in stead to carry the soybeans from the Louisiana swamps of Kip Ma s project

The first story of the Minnesota disaster appeared in the news papers three days later It reported that the farmers who had waite in the streets of Lakewood for six days with no place to store the wheat and no trains to carry it, had demolished the local courthous the mayor s home and the railroad station Then the stories vanishe abruptly and the newspapers kept silent, then began to print admo nitions urging people not to believe unpatriotic rumors

While the flour mills and grain markets of the country wer screaming over the phones and the telegraph wires sending ple to New York and delegations to Washington while strings o freight cars from random corners of the continent were crawlin like rusty caterpillars across the map in the direction of Minnesot —the wheat and hope of the country were waiting to perish alon an empty track under the unchanging green light of signals th called for motion to trains that were not there

At the communication desks of Taggart Transcontinental, a sma crew kept calling for freight cars repeating like the crew of sinking ship an S O S that remained unheard There were freigh cars held loaded for months in the yards of the companies owne by the friends of pull peddlers who ignored the frantic demands t unload the cars and relea[illegible] "Yo[illegible] tell that railroad to— fol [illegible] Br[illegible] Me[illegible] had stood waiting for a dribble of iron. They were pouring whea into ore cars into coal cars into boarded stock cars that wer spilling thin gold trickles along the track as they clattered off The were pouring wheat into passenger coaches, over seats racks an fixtures to send it off to get it moving even if it went moving ir track side ditches in the sudden crash of breaking springs, in th explosions set off by burning journal boxes

They fought for movement for movement with no destination for movement as such like a paralytic struggling in wild stiff incredulous jerks against the [illegible] movement was suddenly impossible There were no [illegible] Taggart had killed them, there were no boats [illegible]

aul Larkin had destroyed them There was only the single line of ail and a net of neglected highways

The trucks and wagons of waiting farmers started trickling blindly own the roads with no maps, no gas, no feed for horses—moving outh, south toward the vision of flour mills awaiting them somewhere with no knowledge of the distances ahead, but with the nowledge of death behind them—moving, to collapse on the roads, the gullies in the breaks of rotted bridges One farmer was ound, half a mile south of the wreck of his truck, lying dead in a

The men in Washington were last to be reached by the panic hey watched, not the news from Minnesota, but the precarious balance of their friendships and commitments, they weighed not the ate of the harvest, but the unknowable result of unpredictable emotions in unthinking men of unlimited power They waited they vaded all pleas, they declared, "Oh ridiculous there s nothing to orry about! Those Taggart people have always moved that wheat n schedule, they ll find some way to move it!"

Then when the State Chief Executive of Minnesota sent a request Washington for the assistance of the Army against the riots he as unable to control—three directives burst forth within two hours, opp ng all trains in the country commandeering all cars to speed Minnesota An order signed by Wesley Mouch demanded the nmediate release of the freight cars held in the service of Kip s Ma. ut by that time, it was too late Ma s freight cars were in Call ornia where the soybeans had been sent to a progressive concern ade up of sociologists preaching the cult of Oriental austerity, and f businessmen formerly in the numbers racket

In Minnesota farmers were setting fire to their own farms they ere demolishing grain elevators and the homes of county of cials they were fighting along the track of the railroad some to ar it un ... streets of gutted towns

... of grain rotting in half moldering piles—a few columns of smoke rising from the plains anding still in the air over blackened ruins—and in an office in ennsylvan ... Rearden s ... ng at his desk looking at a list of ... farm ... him ... itry ... con- had been reaped prematurely, ... mption

On the night of October 15 a copper wire broke in an underground control tower of the Taggart Te ... g the ... signals.

It was only th
in the interlocki
ger disappeared
among the strar
and green not with the living radiance of sight, but with the
stare of glass eyes On the edge of the city a cluster of trains gat
ered at the entrance to the Terminal tunnels and grew through t
minutes of stillness like blood dammed by a clot inside a ve
unable to rush into the chambers of the heart

tablecloth and a cigar butt was swimming in a finger bowl The
men in formal dinner jackets facing her about the table, we
Wesley Mouch Eugene Lawson, Dr Floyd Ferris, Clem Weathert
James Taggart and Cuffy Meigs

'Why?' she had asked when Jim had told her that she had to
tend that dinner "Well because our Board of Directors is
meet next week" And?' "You're interested in what's going to
decided about our Minnesota Line aren t you?" "Is that going

ficient"

She did not ask why those men chose to make all their cruc
decisions at parties of this kind she knew that they did She kn
that beh

the first time that they had asked her, the outsider, the enemy,
one of those secret sessions it was, she thought, an acknowledgme
of the fact that they needed her and, perhaps the first step of th
surrender it was a chance she could not leave untaken

But as she sat in the candlelight of the dining room, she f
certain that she had no chance, she felt restlessly unable to acc
that certainty since she could not grasp its reason, yet lethargica
reluctant to pursue any inquiry

"As, I think you will concede Miss Taggart, there now seems
be no economic justification for the continued existence of a railro
line in Minnesota, which " "And even Miss Taggart will, I
sure, agree that certain
cated, until
there are t
sake of the
tossed into
functorily,
he wonder
was not

onsulting her, but worse an attempt to delude themselves into elieving that she had agreed They asked her questions at times and nterrupted her before she had completed the first sentence of the nswer They seemed to want her approval, without having to know whether she approved or not.

Some crudely childish form of self-deception had made them hoose to give to this occasion the decorous setting of a formal linner They acted as if they hoped to gain from the objects of racious luxury, the power and the honor of which those objects ad once been the product and symbol—they acted she thought like hose

. . . ulting away

She wore a black dress that looked as if it were no more than a iece of cloth crossed over her breasts and falling to her feet in the oft folds of a Grecian tunic, it was made of satin a satin so light and thin that it could have served as the stuff of a nightgown The uster of the clo . . . de
t look
ropert
er in
ade underscoring the pliant fragility of her figure giving her n air of so natural an elegance that it could afford to be scornfully asual. She wore a single piece of jewelry a diamond clip at the dge of the black neckline that kept flashing with the imperceptible notion of her breath like a transformer converting a flicker into ire making one conscious not of the gems but of the living beat ehind them it flashed like a military decoration like wealth worn s a badge of honor She wore no other ornament only the sweep f a black velvet cape more arrogantly ostentatiously patrician han any spread of sables

She regretted it now as she looked at the men before her she felt he embarrassing guilt of pointlessness as if she had tried *to defy* he figures in a waxworks She saw a mindless resentment in their yes and a sneaking trace of the lifeless sexless smutty leer with hich men look at a poster advertising burlesque

"It's a great responsibility" said Eugene Lawson to hold the ecision of life or death over thousands of people and to sacrifice hem when necessary but we must have the courage to do it" *His* olt lips seemed to twist into a smile

"The only factors to consider are land acreage and population gures" said Dr Ferris in a statistical voice blowing smoke rings t the ceiling "Since it is no longer possible to *maintain* both t Minnesota Line and the transcontinental traffic of this *railroad* hoice is between Minnesota and those states west of the R

which were cut off by the failure of the Taggart Tunnel, as well as
the neighboring
practically speak
the acreage and
we should scuttl
munication over a third of a continent"

"I won t give up the continent," said Wesley Mouch, staring down at his dish of ice cream, his voice hurt and stubborn.

She was thinking of the Mesabi Range, the last of the major sources of iron ore, she was thinking of the Minnesota farmers, such as were left of them, the best producers of wheat in the country—she was thinking that the end of Minnesota would end Wisconsin, then Michigan, then Illinois—she was seeing the red breath of the factories dying out over the industrial East—as against the empty miles of western sands, of scraggly pastures and abandoned ranches

"The figures indicate," said Mr Weatherby primly, "that the continued maintenance of both areas seems to be impossible The railway track and equipment of one has to be dismantled to provide the material for the maintenance of the other"

She noticed that Clem Weatherby, their technical expert on railroads, was the man of least influence among them, and Cuffy Meigs—of most Cuffy Meigs sat sprawled in his chair, with a look of patronizing tolerance for their game of wasting time on discussions He spoke little, but when he did, it was to snap decisively, with a contemptuous grin, Pipe down, Jimmy!' or, "Nuts, Wes, you're talking through your hat!" She noticed that neither Jim nor Mouch resented it They seemed to welcome the authority of his assurance they were accepting him as their master.

"We have to be practical," Dr Ferris kept saying "We have to be scientific"

"I need the economy of the country as a whole," Wesley Mouch kept repeating I need the production of a nation"

"Is it economics that you re talking about? Is it production?" she said, whenever her cold, measured voice was able to seize a brief stretch of their time "If it is, then give us leeway to save the Eastern states Thats all thats left of the country—and of the world. If you let us save that, we'll have a chance to rebuild the rest. If not, it's the end Let the Atlantic Southern take care of such transcontinental traffic as still exists Let the local railroads take care of the Northwest But let Taggart Transcontinental drop everything else—yes, everything—and devote all our resources, equipment and rail to the traffic of the Eastern states Let us shrink back to the start of this country, but let us hold that start We'll run no trains west of the Missouri We ll become a local railroad—the local of the industrial East Let us save our industries There's nothing left to save in the West You can run agriculture for centuries by manual labor and oxcarts But destroy the last of this country's industrial plant—and centuries of effort won t be able to rebuild it or to gather the ic strength to make a start How do you expect our indus- railroads—to survive without steel? How do you expec

y steel to be produced if you cut off the supply of iron ore? ve Minnesota, whatever's left of it The country? You have no untry to save if its industries perish. You can sacrifice a leg or an m. You can't save a body by sacrificing its heart and brain. Save r industries Save Minnesota. Save the Eastern Seaboard

It was no use She said it as many times with as many details tistics figures proofs as she could force out of her weary mind o their evasive hearing It was no use They neither refuted nor reed they merely looked as if her arguments were beside the point ere was a sound of hidden emphasis in their answers as if they re giving her an explanation but in a code to which she had no y

"There's trouble in California," said Wesley Mouch sullenly heir state legislature's been acting pretty huffy There's talk of ced ng from the Union"

"Oregon is overrun by gangs of deserters said Clem Weatherby utiously "They murdered two tax collectors within the last three onths."

"The importance of industry to a civilization has been grossly eremphasized" said Dr Ferris dreamily What is now known as e People's State of India has existed for centuries without any in strial development whatever

"People could do with fewer material gadgets and a sterner disci ine of privations said Eugene Lawson eagerly "It would be good r them.

"Oh hell are you going to let that dame talk you into letting the hest country on earth sl p through your fingers? said Cuffy Meigs ping to his feet "It's a fine time to give up a whole continent— d in exchange for what? For a dinky little state that's milked dry yway! I say ditch Minnesota but hold onto your transcontinental agnet. With trouble and riots everywhere, you won't be able to ep people in line unless you have transportation—troop transpor ion—unless you hold your soldiers within a few days journey of y po nt on the continent This is no time to retrench Don't get llow l stening to all that talk You've got the country in your cket. Just keep it there"

"In the lor

"In the lon Meigs He was cing restles of pickings left Cal fornia What I've been inking is we ought to think of expand ng—the way things are ere's nobody to stop us it's there for the taking—Mexico and anada maybe—it ought to be a cinch"

Then she saw the answer she saw the secret premise *behind their* ords. With all of their noisy devot on to the age of science their sterically technological jargon the r cyclotrons their sound raw ese men were moved forward not by the image of an indu yl ne but by the vision of that form of existence which istrialists had swept away—the vision of a fat unhygienic Ind a, eyes staring in indolent stupor out of yers of f othing to do but run precious gem

his fingers and once in a while stick a knife into the body of starved toil-dazed germ-eaten creature as a claim to a few grai

expropriate the factories of others was their acknowledgment of factories value She born of the industrial revolution had not he

d their instincts and emotions that so long as m
str ggle

by pulling levers at an electric sw
board are not easily ruled but men who live by d'gging the s
with their naked fingers are—that the fendal baron did not ne
electronic factories in order to drink his brains away out of jewel
goblets and neither d d the rajahs of the People s State of Ind a.

She saw what they wanted and to what goal their "instinct
wh ch the

because she could not conceive of what would bring human beings
such a state—indifference because she could not regard those w
reached it as human any longer They went on talking but

er head up she saw the courteous figure of a wai
"the assistant manager of the Taggart Terminal is on the telepho
requesting permiss on to speak to you at once He says it's
emergency"

It was a relief to leap to her feet and get out of that room e
if in answer to the call of some new disaster It was a rel ef to h
the assistant manager s voice even though it was saying "
interlocker system is out Miss Taggart. The signals are dead Th
are eight incoming trains held up and six outgoing We can t m
them in or out of the tunnels we can t find the chief engineer
can t locate the breach in the circuit we have no copper wire
repairs we don't know what to do we—" I'll be right down"
sa d dropp ng the receiver

Hurrying to the elevator then half runn ng through the sta
g to life
swer to

s toward her the ray of a lamppost sweeping over lustrous hair, ked arms the swirl of a black cape and the flame of a diamond her breast, with the long, empty corridor of a city street behind

knowledge
ror of a
enchant
belonged

...ically in bitterness in longing—that this feeling was the nse of expectation she had felt at her first ball and at those rare mes when she had wanted the outward beauty of existence to match inner splendor What a time to think of it! she told herself in ockery—not now! she cried to herself in anger—but a desolate ice kept asking her quietly to the rattle of the taxi s wheels You ho believed you must live for your happiness what do you now ave left of it?—what are you gaining from your struggle?—yes! y it honestly what s in it for you?—or are you becoming one of hose abject altruists who has no answer to that question any longer?

Not now!—she ordered as the glowing entrance to the Tag art Terminal flared up in the rectangle of the taxi s windshield

The men in the Terminal manager s office were like extinguished gnals as if here too a circuit were broken and there were no living urrent to make them move They looked at her with a kind of nanimate passivity as if it made no difference whether she let them tay still or threw a switch to set them in motion

The Terminal manager was absent The chief engineer could not e found he had been seen at the Terminal two hours ago not ince The ... ative by olun ... signal ngin ... saying ggre ... aggart! ... But this has never happened ... The interlocker has never failed It s not supposed to fail We know ur jobs we can take care of it as well as anybody can—but not if t breaks down when it s not supposed to!" She could not tell whether the dispatcher an elderly man with years of railroad work behind him still retained his intelligence but chose to hide it or whether months of suppressing it had choked it for good grant um the safety of stagnation

"We don t know what to do Miss Taggart" "We don t know o call for what sort of permission" "There are no rules

an emergency of this kind " "There aren't even any rules about who to lay down the rules for it!"

She listened she reached for the telephone without a word of explanation she ordered the operator to get her the operating vice president of the Atlantic Southern in Chicago, to get him at his home and out of bed if necessary.

'George? Dagny Taggart," she said, when the voice of her competitor came on the wire "Will you lend me the signal engineer of your Chicago terminal Charles Murray, for twenty-four hours? . Yes Right Put him aboard a plane and get him here as fast as you can Tell him we ll pay three thousand dollars . . Yes for the one day Yes as bad as that Yes, I ll pay him in cash, out of my own pocket, if necessary I'll pay whatever it takes to bribe his way aboard a plane, but get him on the first plane out of Chicago No George, not one—not a single mind left on Taggart Transcontinental Yes, I'll get all the papers, exemptions, exceptions and emergency permissions. . . . Thanks, George So long "

She hung up and spoke rapidly to the men before her, not to hear the stillness of the room and of the Terminal, where no sound of wheels was beating any longer, not to hear the bitter words which the stillness seemed to repeat Not a single mind left on Taggart Transcontinental

"Get a wrecking train and crew ready at once," she said "Send them out on the Hudson Line, with orders to tear down every foot of copper wire, any copper wire, lights, signals, telephone, everything that's company property Have it here by morning " "But, Miss Taggart! Our service on the Hudson Line is only temporarily suspended and ... on to d

said, rising to her feet

They followed her as she hurried down the passenger platform past the huddling shifting groups of travelers by the motionless trains She hurried down a narrow catwalk, through a maze of rail, past blinded signals and frozen switches, with nothing but the beat of her ... dangerous tunnels of T ... planks unde ... echo—she h ... in the darkness like a crown without a body, the crown of a deposed ruler above a realm of empty tracks

The tower director was too expert a man at too exacting a job to be able wholly to conceal the dangerous burden of intelligence He understood what she wanted him to do from her first few words and answered only with an abrupt "Yes, ma'am," but he was bent over his charts by the time the others ... her up ... lrating ...

r, a glance of indignation and endurance that matched some emo-
m he had caught in her face "We'll do it first and feel about it
terwards," she said, even though he had made no comment. "Yes,
a am," he answered woodenly.

His room, on the top of an underground tower, was like a glass
randah overlooking what had once been the swiftest, richest and
ost orderly stream

hrough the open door of the relay room, she saw the tower
en standing grimly idle—the men whose jobs had never permitted
moment's relaxation—standing by the long rows that looked like
rtical copper pleats, like shelves of books and as much of a monu-
ent to human intelligence. The pull of one of the small levers,
uch protruded like bookmarks from the shelves, threw thousands
electric circuits into motion, made thousands of contacts and
oke as many others, set dozens of switches to clear a chosen
...sible,
...ought
...nsure
...h by,
...eding
...a breath ... nothing but

eat panels in front of the tower director, the red and green
hts, which had flashed announcing the progress of trains at a dis-
ce of miles, were now so many glass beads—like the glass
ads for which another breed of savages had once sold the Island
Manhattan.

"Call all of your unskilled laborers," she said to the assistant
nager, "the section hands, trackwalkers, engine wipers whoever's
the Terminal right now, and have them come here at once."

"*Here?*"

"Here," she said, pointing at the tracks outside the tower "Call
your switchmen, too Phone your storehouse and have them
ng here every lantern they can lay their hands on, any *sort of*
ntern, conductors' lanterns, storm lanterns, anything"

"*Lanterns*, Miss Taggart?"

"Get going"

"Yes, ma'am"

"What is it we're doing, Miss Taggart?" asked the dispatcher.

"We're going to move trains and we're going to move them
anually"

"*Manually?*" said the signal engineer.

"Yes, brother! Now why should *you* be shocked?" She could no
ist it. "Man is only muscles, isn't he? We're going *back*—

to where there were no interlocking systems, no semaphores, electricity—back to the time when train signals were not steel wire, but men holding lanterns Physical men, serving as lamppo You've advocated it long enough—you got what you wanted. you thought that your tools would determine your ideas? But happens to be the other way around—and now you're going to the kind of tools your ideas have determined!'

But even to go back took an act of intelligence—she thought, fe ing the paradox of her own position, as she looked at the lethar of the faces around her

"How will we work the switches, Miss Taggart?"

"By hand."

"And the signals?"

'By hand."

"How?"

"By written orders"

"Uh?'

"By written orders—just as in the old days" She pointed to tower director "He's working out a schedule of how to move trains and which tracks to use He'll write out an order for ev signal and switch, he'll pick some men as runners and they'll k delivering the orders to every post—and it will take hours to what used to take minutes, but we'll get those waiting trains the Terminal and out on the road."

"We're to work it that way all night?"

"And all day tomorrow—until the engineer who's got the bra for it, shows you how to repair the interlocker"

"There's nothing in the union contracts about men standing w lanterns There's going to be trouble The union will object."

"Let them come to me"

"The Unification Board will object."

"I'll be responsible"

"Well, I wouldn't want to be held for giving the orders—"

"I'll give the orders"

She stepped out on the landing of the iron stairway that hung the side of the tower ... It seemed

... dark ... of the Taggart underground—and ... stab of burning humiliation that she should now see it brou down to the level where human lampposts would stand in tunnels as its last memorial statues

She could barely distinguish the ... men when they f ered at the foot of the tower They ... ing silently thro darkness and stood without mo ... sh murk, with on the walls behind them ar ... falling on

shoulders from the tower's windows She could see the greasy garments, the slack, muscular bodies, the limply hanging arms of men

seek it. They stood in silence, not with the apprehensive

directions The interlocking control system has broken down. It will now be replaced by human labor. Train service will be resumed at once"

She noticed some faces in the crowd staring at her with a peculiar look with a veiled resentment and the kind of insolent curiosity that made her suddenly conscious of being a woman Then she remembered what she wore, and thought that it did look preposterous—and then, at the sudden stab of some violent impulse that felt like defiance and like loyalty to the full, real meaning of the moment, she threw her cape back and stood in the raw glare of light, under the sooted columns, like a figure at a formal reception sternly erect, flaunting the luxury of naked arms, of glowing black satin, of a diamond flashing like a military cross

"The tower director will assign switchmen to their posts He will select men for the job of signaling trains by means of lanterns and for the task of transmitting his orders Trains will—"

She was fighting to drown a bitter voice that seemed to be saying that's all they're fit for, these men if even that there's not a single mind left anywhere on Taggart Transcontinental

"Trains will continue to be moved in and out of the Terminal You will remain at your posts until—"

Then she stopped It was his eyes and hair that she saw first—the pitilessly perceptive eyes, the streaks of hair shaded from gold to copper that seemed to reflect the glow of sunlight in the murk of the underground—she saw John Galt among the chain gang of the [illegible] she [illegible] eyes [illegible]

"Wh[illegible]

It was the soft voice of the tower director who stood by her side, with some sort of paper in his hand—and she thought it was strange to emerge from a span of unconsciousness which had been the span of the sharpest awareness she had ever experienced only she did not know how long it had lasted or where she was or why She had been aware of Galt's face, she had been seeing in the shape of his mouth, in the planes of his cheeks the crackup of that implacable serenity which had always been his but he still retained it in his look of acknowledging the breach of admitting that this moment was too much even for him

She knew that she went on speaking because those around her looked as if they were listening, though she could not hear a

she went on speaking as if carrying out a hypnotic order given herself some endless time ago, knowing only that the complet of that order was a form of defiance against him, neither known nor hearing her own words

She felt as if she were standing in a radiant silence where sight w her only capacity and his face was its only object, and the sight his face was like a speech in the form of a pressure at the base her throat. It seemed so natural that he should be here, it seemed unendurably simple—she felt as if the shock were not his presence but the presence of others on the tracks of her railroad, where belonged and they did not She was seeing those moments aboard train when, at its plunge into the tunnels, she had felt a sudde solemn tension, as if this place were showing her in naked sim plicity the essence of her railroad and of her life, the union consciousness and matter, the frozen form of a mind's ingenui giving physical existence to its purpose, she had felt a sense of sud den hope, as if this place held the meaning of all of her values, and sense of secret excitement, as if a nameless promise were awaitin her under the ground—it was right that she should now meet him here, *he* had been the meaning and the promise—she was not seein his clothing any longer, nor to what level her railroad had reduce him—she was seeing only the vanishing torture of the months whe he had been outside her reach—she was seeing in his face the con fession of what those months had cost him—the only speech sh heard was as if she were saying to him This is the reward for a my days—and as if he were answering For all of mine

She knew that she had finished speaking to the strangers wh she saw that the tower c ... saying something to them, glar ... a sense of irresistible c ... stairs, slipping away fro ... the exit, but into the d ... follow me, she thought—and felt as if the thought were n words, but in the tension of her muscles, the tension of her will accomplish a thing she knew to be outside her power, yet she knew with certainty that it would be accomplished and by her wish no, she thought, not by her wish, but by its total rightness You wi follow me—it was neither plea nor prayer nor demand, but the quiet statement of a fact, it contained the whole of her power of knowledge and the whole of the knowledge she had earned through the years You will follow me, if we are what we are, you and I, if we live, if the world exists, if you know the meaning of this moment and can't let it slip by, as others let it slip, into the senselessness of the unwilled and unreached You will follow me—she felt an exultant assurance, which was neither hope nor faith, but an act of worship for the logic of existence

She was hurrying down the remnants of abandoned rails, down the long, dark corridors twisting through granite She lost the sound of the director's voice behind her Then she felt the beat of her rteries and heard, in answering rhythm, the beat of the city above head, but she felt as if she heard the motion of her blood as

ound filling the silence, and the [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] e [illegible] to the next blue light that swept across the
ine of his eyes, the eyes that remained held level, directed ahead—and she felt certain that she had stayed in his sight from the moment he had seen her at the tower.

She heard the beat of the city above them—these tunnels, she had once thought, were the roots of the city and of all the motion reaching to the sky—but they, she thought, John Galt and she, were the living power within these roots, they were the start and aim and meaning—he, too, she thought, heard the beat of the city as the beat of his body

She threw her cape back, she stood defiantly straight, as he had seen her stand on the steps of the tower—as he had seen her for the first time, ten years ago, here, under the ground—she was hearing the words of his confession, not as words, but by means of that beating which made it so difficult to breathe You looked like a symbol of luxury and you belonged in the place that was its source . . . you seemed to bring the enjoyment of life back to its rightful owners . . . you had a look of energy and of its reward, together . . . and I was the first man who had ever stated in what manner these two were inseparable

The next span of moments was like flashes of light in stretches of blinded unconsciousness—the moment when she saw his face, as he stopped beside her, when she saw the unastonished calm the leashed intensity, the laughter of understanding in the dark green eyes—the moment when she knew what he saw in her face, by the sight, drawn harshness of his lips—the moment when she *felt his* mouth on hers, when she felt the shape of his mouth both as an absolute shape and as a liquid filling her body—then the motion of his lips down the line of her throat a drinking motion that left a trail of bruises—then the sparkle of her diamond clip against the trembling copper of his hair

Then she was conscious of nothing but the sensations of her body, because her body acquired the sudden power to let her know her most complex val[illegible] as by direct perception. *Just as her eyes had* [illegible] as her [illegible] body

pressure of a hand that made her tremble, but the instantaneous m of its meaning, the knowledge that it was *his* hand, that it mov as if her flesh were h

ousinp of him, of everything that was his person and t life—from the night of the mass meeting in a factory in Wiscons to the Atlantis of a valley hidden in the Rocky Mountains, to tl triumphant mockery of the green eyes of the superlative intel gence above a worker's figure at the foot of the tower—it contain her pr de

had chos now giv the sum e knew w breasts.

He tore off her cape and she felt the cl

by means of the
for her triumpha
tool for her awa
limit of her capa
patient demand,
it had the same
same inexhaustib of radiant greed

He pulled her head back for a moment, to look straight into l eyes, to let her see his, to let her know the full meaning of th actions, as if throwing the spotlight of consciousness upon them the meeting of their eyes in a moment of intimacy greater than one to come

Then she felt the mesh of burlap striking the skin of her should she found herself lying on the broken sandbags, she saw the lo tight gleam of her stockings, she felt his mouth pressed to her an then rising in a tortured motion up the line of her leg as if it had

then she knew only as an upward streak motion that released and united her body into a single shock pleasure—then she knew nothing but the motion of his body the driving greed that went reaching on and on, as if she w not a person any longer, only a sensation of endless reaching for impossible—then she knew that it was

lay still, knov

He lay bes
granite vault
of sandbags as
wedge of her
beads of moi
into invisible
spoke, his voi sounded as if he were quietly continuing a sente answer to the questions in her mind, as if he had nothing to h

om her any longer and what he owed her now was only the act of
ıdressing his soul as simply as he would have undressed his body
" this is how I ve watched you for ten years from here,
om under the ground under your feet knowing every move
ıu made in your office at the top of the building but never see ng
ıu, never enough ten years of n ghts, spent waiting to catch a
ımpse of you, here on the platforms when you boarded a train.
Whenever the order came down to couple your car I d know of
and wa t and see you come down the ramp and wish you d dn t
alk so fast it was so much like you that walk, I d know it
ıywhere your walk and those legs of yours it was always
t me
hink
not
you
uy when I turned back to my work when I went
me just before sunrise for the three hours of sleep which I d dn t

"I love you," she said, her vo ce quiet and almost toneless except
r a fragile sound of youth.

He closed his eyes as if letting the sound travel through the years
hind them. "Ten years Dagny except that once there were
few weeks when I had you before me in pla n sight within reach,
ot hurrying away but held still as on a l ghted stage a private
age for me to watch and I watched you for hours through
any evenings in the l ghted window of an office that was
lled the John Galt Line. And one n ght—"

Her breath was a faint gasp "Was it you that night?"

Did you see me?"

"I saw your shadow on the pavement pac ng back and
rth it looked l'ke a struggle it looked like—" She
opped she d d not want to say "torture."

It was" he sa d quietly "That n ght I wanted to walk in to
ce you, to speak to That was the n ght I came closest to
eaking my oath when I saw you slumped across your desk when
saw you broken by the burden you were carry ng—"

"John that night it was *you* that I was thinking of only I
dn't know it "

"But, you see *I* knew t."

it was you, all my life through everyth ng I d d and every
ıng I wanted "

"I know it."

"John the hardest was not when I left you in the valley it
as—"

"Your rad o speech, the day you returned?"

"Yes! Were you l stening?"

"Of magnificent thing to do

ad you expected

"No"

"Was it ?" she stopped

"Hard? Yes But only for the first few days That next night . Do you want me to tell you what I did the night after I learned it

"Yes"

"I had never seen Hank Rearden, only pictures of him in the newspapers I knew that he was in New York, that night, at some conference of big industrialists I wanted to have just one look at him I went to wait at the entrance of the hotel where that conference was held There were bright lights under the marquee of the entrance, but it was dark beyond, on the pavement, so I could see without being seen there were a few loafers and vagrants hanging around there was a drizzle of rain and we clung to the walls of th

be for that moment There were chauffeurs driving up their ca there were a few reporters delaying them for questions and hanger on trying to catch a word from them They were worn men, the industrialists aging flabby, frantic with the effort to disguise un certainty And then I saw him He wore an expensive trenchcoat an a hat slant ng across h s e es He walked fly with the kind

impatient and a little amused And then, for one instant, I did I had never done before what most men wreck their lives on dou —I saw that moment out of context, I saw the world as he mad it look, as if it matched him as if he were its symbol—*I* saw world of achievement of unenslaved energy, of unobstructed dri through purposeful years to the enjoyment of one's reward—I saw as I stood ... the ... ers woul ... spers ... en ... t it wa ... and

all of its actual meaning—I saw what price he was paying for h brilliant ability what torture he was enduring in silent bewilderment struggling to understand what *I* had understood—I saw that th world he suggested did not exist and was yet to be made I saw hi again for what he was the symbol of my battle, the unrewarded her whom *I* was to avenge and to release—and then . . . then I ac cepted what I had learned about you and him I saw that it change nothing that I should have expected it—that it was right"

He heard the faint sound of her moan and he chuckled softly

"Dagny, it's not that I don't suffer, it's that I know the unim portance of suffering I know that pain is to be fought and thrown de, not to be accepted as part of one's soul and

r across one's view of existence. Don't feel sorry for me. It was ne right then."

She turned ... he smiled, lift- ... she lay help- ... r, here—here!

"Ever since—"

"Ever since I quit the Twentieth Century"

"The night when you saw me for the first time . . . you were rking here, then?"

"Yes. And the morning when you offered to work for me as my ok, I was only your track laborer on leave of absence. Do you why I laughed as I did?"

She was looking up at his face; hers was a smile of pain, his—of re gaiety "John . . ."

"Say it. But say it all."

"You were here . . . all those years . . ."

"Yes"

". . . all those years . . . while the railroad was perishing . . . ile I was searching for men of intelligence while I was uggling to hold onto any scrap of it I could find

". . . while you were combing the country for the inventor of my otor, while you were feeding James Taggart and Wesley Mouch, ile you were naming your best achievement after the enemy om you wanted ...

... nside ... long- ... me, ... g an ... your

ht ... ust ... u ... t to ... lue

ould have to look. I was here I was waiting for you I love you, agny I love you more than my life I who have taught men how e is to be ... to expect the unpaid ... that I

...

by, it was ours, my love, we had earned it But you're ... quit and join me—you don't have to tell me I know—and since I ose to take what I wanted before it was fully mine, I'll have to

pay for it, I have no
if I give in to an en
answer to the look o
in mind—and *that* is
in the course you re
My actual enemies a
only one who can lead them to find me They would never have
capacity to know what I am, but with your help—they will"

No!

'No not by your intention And you're free to change your cou
but so long as you follow it, you re not free to escape its lo
Don t frown the choice was mine and it s a danger I chose to acc
I am a trader Dagny, in all things I wanted you, I had no po
to change your decision I had only the power to consider the p
and decide whether I could afford it I could My life is mine
spend or to invest—and you you re —as if his gesture were c
tinuing his sentence he raised her across his arm and kis
her mouth while her body hung limply in surrender her h
streaming down her he
his lips—"
wanted yo
not my m

There was a sudden glint of hardness in his eyes as he sat up
smiled and asked Would you want me to join you and go
work? Would you like me to repair that interlocking signal syst
of yours within an hour?

"No!" The cry was immediate—in answer to the flash of a s
den image the image of the men in the private dining room of
Wayne Falkland

He laughed Why not?

in stand

you lear

Not yet," he said quietly

He got up and she rose obediently, unable to speak

"I will rema n here

ing yourself to approach me Don t seek
here Don t come to my home Don t ever let them see us togeth
And when don't
Taggar
for

She inclined her head in silent promise

But when he turned to go a sudden shudder ran through her bo
like a first jolt of awakening or a last convulsion of life and
led in an involuntary cry "Where are you going?"

"To be a lamppost and stand holding a lantern till dawn—which the only work your world relegates me to and the only work it s ng to get."

She seized his arm to hold him to follow to follow him blindly, andoning everything but the sight of his face "John!

He gripped her wrist, twisted her hand and threw it off No" he d

Then he took her hand and raised it to his lips and the pressure his mouth was more passionate a statement than any he had osen to confess. Then he walked away down the vanishing line rail, and it seemed to her that both the rail and the figure were andoning her at the same time

When she staggered out into the concourse of the Terminal the st blast of rolling wheels went shuddering through the walls of e building like the sudden beat of a heart that had stopped The mple of Nathaniel Taggart was silent and empty its changeless ght beating down on a deserted stretch of marble Some shabby gures shuffled across it as if lost in its shining expanse On the steps the pedestal under the statue of the austere exultant figure a gged bum sat slumped in passive resignation like a wing plucked rd with no place to go resting on any chance cornice

She fell down on the steps of the pedestal like another derelict er dust smeared cape wrapped tightly about her she sat still her ead on her arm past crying or feeling or moving

It seemed to her only that she kept seeing a figure with a raised rm holding a light and it looked at times like the Statue of Lib rty and then it looked like a man with sun-streaked hair holding lantern against a midnight sky a red lantern that stopped the novement of the world

"Dont take it to heart lady whatever it is said the bum in a one of exhausted compassion "Nothings to be done about it any vay What s the use lady? Who is John Galt?"

Chapter VI THE CONCERTO OF DELIVERANCE

On October 20 the steel workers union of Rearden Steel demanded raise in wages

Hank Rearden learned it from the newspapers no demand had been presented to him and it had not been considered necessary to inform him The demand was made to the Unification Board it was not explained why no other steel company was presented with a similar claim He was unable to tell whether the demanders did or did not represent his workers the Board s rules on union elec ... learned only ... he Board had ... union s peti ... been held on tion, refusing to grant the raise If any ... the matter, Rearden had not known about it. He had not been

sulted informed or notified He had waited, volunteering no questions

On October 25 the newspapers of the country, controlled by the same men who controlled the Board, began a campaign of com

quest for food—next to a story about a champagne bottle ... over somebody s head at a drunken party given by an unnamed steel tycoon at a fashionable hotel, the steel tycoon had been Orren Boyle but the story mentioned no names Inequalities still exist among us the newspapers were saying and cheat us of the benefits of our enlightened age Privations have worn the nerves and temper of the people The situation is reaching the danger point We fear an outbreak of violence We fear an outbreak of violence the newspapers kept repeating

On October 28 a group of the new workers at Rearden Steel attacked a foreman and knocked the tuyères off a blast furnace Two days later a similar ... of the administration buildin ... crane upsetting a ladle o ... standers Guess I went nuts worrying about my hungry kids he said when arrested This is no time to theorize about who s right or wrong" the newspapers commented Our sole concern is the fact that an inflammatory situation is endangering the steel output of the country"

Rearden watched asking no questions He waited, as if some final knowledge were in the process of unraveling before him a process not to be hastened or stopped No—he thought through the early dusk of autumn evenings looking out the window of his office —no he was not indifferent to his mills but the feeling which had once been passion for a living entity was now like the wistful tenderness one feels for the memory of the loved and dead The special quality of what one feels for the dead, he thought is that no action is possible any longer

On the morning of October 31 he received a notice informing ... safety

with every requirement of the law—except that no such deficie...

ntastic than the rest?" "Hank do you want me to do nothing? To ke it lying down?" "No standing up And I mean *standing* ont move Dont act." "But they ve left you helpless" Have ley?" he asked softly smiling

He had a few hundred dollars in cash left in his wallet, noth ng lse But the odd, glowing warmth in his mind like the feel of a istant handshake was the thought that in a secret safe of his bed oom there lay a bar of solid gold given to him by a gold haired irate.

Next day on November 1, he received a telephone call from Washington, from a bureaucrat whose voice seemed to come sliding own the wire on its knees in protestations of apology A mistake Mr Rearden! It was nothing but an unfortunate mistake! That at achment was [illegible] know how it is nowadays [illegible] with the amount of red [illegible] l mixed the records and [illegible] ou—when it wasn't your [illegible] at all it was in fact, the case of a soap manufacturer! Please accept our apologies Mr Rearden our deepest personal apologies at the top level." The voice slid to a slight, expectant pause "Mr Rearden ?" "I m listening I can t tell you how sorry we are to have caused you any embarrassment or inconvenience And with all those damn formalities that we have to go through—you know how it is red tape!—it will take a few days perhaps a week to de-process that order and to lift the attachment Mr Rearden?" "I heard you "We re desperately sorry and ready to make any amends within our power You will of course be entitled to claim damages for any inconvenience this might cause you and we are prepared to pay We won t contest it. You w ll of course file such a claim and—" "I have not said that "Uh? No you haven t that is well what *have* you said Mr Rearden? "I have said noth ng."

Late on the next afternoon another voice came pleading from Washington This one did not seem to sl de but to bounce on the telephone wire with the gay virtuosity of a tight rope walker It introduced itself as Tinky Holloway and pleaded that Rearden at tend a conference "an informal little conference just a few of us the top level few" to be held in New York at the Wayne Falkland Hotel day after next.

"There have been so many misunderstandings in the past few weeks!" said Tinky Holloway Such unfortuna e misunderstand ings—and so unnecessary! We could stra ghten everyth ng out in a jiffy Mr Rearden if we had a chance to have a l ttle talk with you We re extremely anxious to see you

"You can issue a subpoena for me any t me you wish"

"Oh no! no! no The voice sounded frightened. "No Mr Rear den—why think of such things? You don t understand us we re anxious to meet you on a friendly basis, we re seeking nothing but your voluntary co-operation." Holloway paused tensely wonde whether he had heard the faint sound of a distant c waited but heard nothing else "Mr Rearden?"

"Yes?"

Surely Mr Rearden at a time like this, a conference with us could be to your great advantage"

"A conference—about what?

"You ve encountered so many difficulties—and we re anxious to help you in any way we can"

"I have not asked for help"

These are precarious times Mr Rearden the public mood is so uncertain and inflammatory so dangerous . and we want to be able to protect you

"I have not asked for protection"

But surely you realize that we re in a position to be of value to you and if there s anything you want from us any

"There isn t

"But you must have problems you d like to discuss with us."

I haven t."

"Then well then —giving up the attempt at the play of granting a favor Holloway switched to an open plea—"then won't you just give us a hearing?

If you have anything to say to me"

"We have Mr Rearden we certainly have! That's all we're asking for—a hearing Just give us a chance Just come to this conference You wouldn t be committing yourself to anything—" I said it involuntarily and stopped hearing a bright mocking sign of life in Rearden s voice an unpromising sound, as Rearden answered

I know it

"Well I mean that is well then will you come?"

All right said Rearden I'll come"

He d d not listen to Holloway s assurances of gratitude he noted only that Holloway kept repeating "At seven P.M, November fourth Mr Rearden November fourth " as if the date had some special s gnificance

Rearden dropped the receiver and lay back in his chair looking at the glow of furnace flames on the ceiling of his office. He knew that the conference was a trap he knew also that he was walking into it with nothing for any trappers to gain

Tinky Holloway dropped the receiver in h s Washington office and sat up tensely frown ng Claude Slagenhop president of Friends of Global Progress who had sat in an armchair nervously chewing a matchstick glanced t p at him and asked "Not so good?"

Holloway shook his head "He'll come but no got so good" He added "I don't think he'll take it."

"That s what my punk told me"

"I know"

"The punk said we d better not try it"

"God damn your punk! We ve got to! We'll have to risk it!"

The punk was Phil p Rearden who weeks ago had reported to Claude Slagenhop "No he won t let me in he won't give me a job I ve tried as you wanted me to I ve tried my best but it s no use he won t let me set foot ins de his mills And as to his fran

mind—listen, it's bad. It's worse than anything I expected. I know
m and I can tell you that you won't have a chance. He's pretty
ach at the end of his rope. One more squeeze will snap it. You
ld the big boys wanted to know. Tell them not to do it. Tell them
. . . Claude, God help us, if they do it, they'll lose him!"
Vell, you're not of much help," Slagenhop had said dryly, turning
ay Philip had seized his sleeve and asked, his voice shrinking
ddenly into open anxiety, "Say, Claude . . . according to . . .
Directive 10-289 . . . if he goes, there's . . . there's to be no
irs?" "That's right." "They'd seize the mills and . . . and every-
ing?" "That's the law." "But . . . Claude, they wouldn't do that
[illegible] You know that.
Because
[illegible] for you,
[illegible] at all!"
[illegible] cried in
ne. "Claude, they won't leave me out in the cold, will they? I
long, don't I? They've always said I belonged, they've always
d they needed me . . . they said they needed men like me, not
[illegible] member? And after

On the morning of November 4, Hank Rearden was awakened
the ringing of the telephone. He opened his eyes to the sight of
clear, pale sky, the sky of early dawn, in the window of his
droom, a sky the delicate color of aquamarine, with the first rays
an invisible sun giving a shade of porcelain pink to Philadelphia's
[illegible]

"Mother—at this hour?" he asked dryly
"Oh, you're always up at dawn, and I wanted to catch you before
u went to the office."
"Yes? What is it?"
"I've got to see you, Henry. I've got to speak to you. Today
metime today It's important."
"Has anything happened?"
"No . . . yes . . . that is . . . I've got to have a talk with you
person. Will you come?"
"I'm sorry, I can't. I have an appointment in New York
you want me to come tomorrow—"

"No! No, not tomorrow. It's got to be today It's got to" Th was a dim tone of panic in her voice, but it was the stale panic chronic helplessness, not the sound of an emergency—except for odd echo of fear in her mechanical insistence

What is it, Mother?"

'I can t talk about it over the telephone I've got to see you."

"Then if you wish to come to the office—"

No! Not at the office! I've got to see you alone, where we t talk Can't you come here today, as a favor? It's your mother wh asking you a favor You've never come to see us at all And ma you re not the one to blame for it, either But can't you do it me this once, if I beg you to?"

'All right, Mother I'll be there at four o'clock this afternoon."

"That will be fine, Henry Thank you, Henry That will be fin

It seemed to him that there was a touch of tension in the air the mills, that day It was a touch too slight to define—but mills, to him, were like the face of a loved wife where he co catch shades of feeling almost ahead of expression He noti small clusters of the new workers, just three or four of th huddling together in conversation—once or twice too often. noticed their manner a manner suggesting a poolroom corner, a factory He noticec glances a shade too not quite enough to v ... he stoo

weight of unconfessed unhappiness, the stern endurance that forb him to confess it, the desperate innocence of the effort to und stand his family the effort to be just

He walked slowly up the path toward the door He felt no e tion, only the sense of a great, solemn clarity. He knew that house was a monument of guilt—of his guilt toward himself

He had expected to see his mother and Philip, he had not pected the third person who rose, as they did, at his entrance into the living room it was Lillian

He stopped on the threshold They stood looking at his face and and at the open door behind him Their faces had a look of fear and cunning the look of that blackmail through virtue which he had learned to understand, as if they hoped to get away with it by means of nothing but his pity, to hold him trapped, when a single step back could take him out of their reach

They had counted on his pity and dreaded his anger, they had not dared consider the third alternative his indifference.

"What is she doing here?" he asked, turning to his mother, his voice dispassionately flat

"Lillian's been living here ever since your divorce," she defensively. "I couldn t let her starve on the city I?"

The look in his mother's eyes was half plea, as if she were beg ng him not to slap her face, half triumph, as if she had slapped s. He knew her motive it was not compassion, there had never en much love between Lillian and her, it was their common venge against him, it was the secret satisfaction of spending his oney on the ex wife he had refused to support

Lillian's head was poised to bow in greeting with the tentative nt of a smile on her lips, half timid, half brash He did not pre- nd to ignore her, he looked at her, as if he were seeing her fully, t as if no presence were being registered in his mind. He said thing, closed the door and stepped ...

... do you mean?"

"Don't you understand me?"

"*No*"

"*Well*"—she spread her hands in an untidily fluttering gesture of ...lplessness—"Well . ." Her eyes darted about struggling to ... many things to say ... well, there s ... itself . it s not

... practical matter? Our allowance checks—Philip s and mine ... the first of the month, but on account of that attachment order, ... checks couldn't come through. You know that, don t you?"

"I know it."

"Well, what are we going to do?"

"I don t know"

"I mean, what are *you* going to do about it?"

"Nothing"

His mother sat staring at him, as if counting the seconds of ...ence "Nothing, Henry?"

"I have ... ...hing *intensity* ... that immedi ... was only the

... of a much wider issue

"But, Henry, we re caught short."

"So was I"

"But can t you send us some cash or something?"

... any cash" ... *unexpected* it scared ... ive us credit, unless ... credit card or

...ing So will you speak to them and arrange

"You won't?" She choked on a small gasp "Why?"

"I will not assume obligations that I can't fulfill"

"What do you mean?"

"I will not assume debts I have no way of repaying"

"What do you mean, no way? That attachment is only som sort of technicality, it's only temporary, everybody knows that!"

"Do they? I don't"

"But, Henry—a grocery bill! You're not sure you'll be able to pa a grocery bill, *you*, with all the millions you own?"

"I'm not going to defraud the grocer by pretending that I ow those millions"

"What are you talking about? Who owns them?"

"Nobody"

"What do you mean?"

"Mother I think you understand me fully I think you unde stood it before I did There isn't any ownership left in existence any property It's what you've approved of and believed in f years You wanted me tied I'm tied Now it's too late to play at games about it"

"Are you going to let some political ideas of yours—" She sa the look on his face and stooped abruptly

Lillian sat looking down at the floor, as if afraid to glance t at this moment Philip sat cracking his knuckles

His mother dragged her eyes into focus again and whispere "Don't abandon us, Henry" Some faint stab of life in her voi told him that the lid of her real purpose was cracking open "The are terrible times, and we're scared That's the truth of it, Henr we're scared, because you're turning away from us Oh, I don't mea just that grocery bill but that's a sign—a year ago you wouldn have let that happen to us Now . . now you don't care." Sh made an expectant pause "Do you?"

"No"

"Well well, I guess the blame is ours That's what I want to tell you—that we know we're to blame We haven't treated yo right, all these years We've been unfair to you, we've made yo suffer, we've used you and given you no thanks in return. We guilty, Henry, we've sinned against you, and we confess it Wh more can we say to you now? Will you find it in your heart forgive us?"

"What is it you want me to do?" he asked, in the clear, flat to of a business conference

"I don't know! Who am I to know? But that's not what I'm ta [illegible] ·ling It's your feeling th [illegible] eeling—even if we do [illegible] Vill you cancel the pa [illegible] you to [illegible]

The look of terror in her eyes was real A year ago he wou have told himself that this was her way of making amends, would have choked his revulsion against her words, words whi conveyed nothing to him but the fog of the meaningless; he wou violated his mind to give them meaning, even if he did n

understand, he would have ascribed to her the virtue of sincerity in her own terms even if they were not his But he was through with granting respect to any terms other than his own.

"Will you forgive us?"

"Mother, it would be best not to speak of that Don t press me to tell you why I think you know it as well as I do If there's anything you want done, tell me what it is There's nothing else to discuss"

"But I *don t* understand you! I don t! That s what I called you re for—to ask your forgiveness! Are you going to refuse to an- er me?"

"Very well. What would it mean, my forgiveness?"

"Uh?"

"I said what would it mean?"

She spre d t

f

"Do you wish me to pretend that the past has not existed?"

"Oh God, Henry, can't you see? All we want is only to know at you . that you feel some concern for us'

"I don't feel it. Do you wish me to fake it?"

"But that's what I m begging you for—to *feel* it!"

"On what ground?"

"Ground?"

"In exchange for what?"

"Henry, Henry, it s not business we're talking about not steel nnages and bank balances, it s *feelings*—and you talk like a ader!"

"I am one"

What he saw in her eyes was terror—not the helpless terror of ruggling and failing to understand but the terror of being pushed ward the edge where to avoid understanding would no longer be ossible

"Look, Henry," said Philip hastily "Mother can t understand ose things We don't know how to approach you We *can't speak* our language"

"I don t speak yours"

"What she's trying to say is that we re sorry We're terribly sorry at we've hurt you You think we re not paying for it, but we are. We re suffering remorse"

The pain in Philip s face was real A year ago Rearden would ave felt pity Now, he knew that they had held him through othing but his reluctance to hurt them *his fear of their* pain. He as not afraid of it any longer

"We're sorry, Henry We know we've *harmed* you We wish we ould atone for it. But what can we do? The past is past. We an't undo it."

"Neither can I"

"You can accept our repentance," said Lillian in a voice with caution. "I have nothing to gain from you now I only

you to know that whatever I've done I've done it because I lov
you

He turned away without answering

"Henry! cried his mother Whats happened to you? What changed you like that? You don t seem to be human any more! Yo keep pressing us for answers when we haven't any answers to giv You keep beating us with logic—whats logic at a time like thi —whats logic when people are suffering?

We cant help it! cried Philip

We re at your mercy" said Lillian.

They were throwing their pleas at a face that could not b reached They did not know—and their panic was the last of the struggle to escape the knowledge—that his merciless sense of justic which had been their only hold on him which had made him tak any punishment and give them the benefit of every doubt was no turned against them—that the same force that had made hi tolerant, was now the force that made him ruthless—that th just ce which would forgive miles of innocent errors of knowledge would not forgive a single step taken in conscious evil

Henry don t you understand us? his mother was pleading

I do he said quietly

She looked away avoiding the clarity of his eyes 'Don't yo care what becomes of us?

I dont

"Arent you human? Her voice grew shrill with anger "Aren't you capable of any love at all? Its your heart I m trying to reach not your m nd! Love is not something to argue and reason and bargain about! Its something to give! To feel! Oh God Henry can't you feel without thinking?"

I never have"

In a moment her voice came back low and droning "We're not as smart as you are not as strong If we ve sinned and blun dered its because we re helpless We need you youre all we've got—and we re losing you—and we re afraid These are terrible times and getting worse people are scared to death scared and blind and not knowing what to do How are we to cope with it, if you leave us? We re small and weak and we ll be swept like driftwood in that terror thats running loose in the world Maybe we had our share of guilt for it, maybe we helped to bring it about, not knowing any better but whats done is done—and we can't stop it now If you abandon us we re lost. If you give up and vanish l ke all those men who—

It was not a sound that stopped her it was only a movement of his eyebrows the brief swift movement of a check mark Then they saw him smile the nature of the smile was the most terrifying of answers

"

"

qu [illegible] can't You

[illegible] deserter, because now they take it out on your family!

:y'll leave us penniless, they'll seize everything, they'll leave us starve, they'll—"

"Keep still!" cried Lillian, more adept than the others at reading danger signs in Rearden's face

His face held the remnant of a smile, and they knew that he s not seeing them any longer, but it was not in their power to ow why his smile now seemed to hold pain and an almost wistful ging, or why he was looking across the room, at the niche of farthest window.

He was seeing a finely sculptured face held composed under the hing of his insults, he was hearing a voice that had said to him

ur pleas for mercy, the logic of those feelings they so righteously oclaimed as non logical—*there* was the simple brutal essence of men who speak of being able to feel without thought and of cing mercy over justice

They had known what to fear; they had grasped and named, fore he had, the only way of deliverance left open to him, they d understood the hopelessness of his industrial position, the

vour the last of him in the name of mercy forgiveness and

I very quietly, o name what ong with your and, as your immolation"

"Logic!" she screamed "There you go again with your damn gic! It's pity that we need, pity not logic!"

He rose to his feet

"Wait! Don't go! Henry, don't abandon us! Don't sentence us perish! Whatever we are we're human! We want to live!"

do If

y into

n expression intended as a smile of amusement yet holding noth ig but fear and malice "You won t be able to quit and run away," aid Philip "You can't run away without money"

It seemed to strike its goal, Rearden stopped short, then chuckled.

"Thanks Philip," he said

"Uh?" Philip gave a nervous jerk of bewilderment

"So that s the purpose of the attachment order That's what .

friends are afraid of I knew they were getting set to spring sor thing on me today I didn t know that the attachment was th idea of cutting off escape " He turned incredulously to look at mother And that s why you had to see me *today*, before the c ference in New York "

"Mother didn't know it!' cried Philip, then caught himself a cried louder I don t know what you re talking about' I have said anything' I haven t said it'" His fear now seemed to ha some much less mystic and much more practical quality

"Don t worry you poor little louse, I won t tell them that you told me anything And if you were trying—"

He did not finish, he looked at the three faces before him and sudden smile ended his sentence, a smile of weariness, of pity incredulous revulsion He was seeing the final contradiction grotesque absurdity at the end of the irrationalists' game the m in Washington had hoped to hold him by prompting *these* th to try for the role of hostages

You think you re so good, don't you?" It was a sudden cry a it came from Lillian she had leaped to her feet to bar his exit, h face was

when she

You re so

She loo

game was

completing a circuit and in sudden clarity he knew what her gam had been and why she had married him

If to choose a person as the constant center of one s concer as the focus of one s view of life was to love—he thought—then was true that she loved him but if, to him, love was a celebrat of one s self and of existence—then to the self haters and lif haters, the pursuit of destruction was the only form and equival of love It was f chose him for his stren as one chooses

the ma vemen midst o

those pretentious ashes who called themselves an intellectual elit the burned-out remnants of undigested culture feeding on the af glow of the minds of others offering their denial of the mind their only claim to distinction, and a craving to control the worl as their only lust—she the woman hanger-on of that elite wearin *their* shopworn sneer as her answer to the universe, holding im potence as superiority and emptiness as virtue—he unaware of thei hatred innocently scornful of their posturing fraud—she, seei him as the danger to their world, as a threat, as a challenge, as reproach

The lust that drives others to enslave an empire, ha her limits a passion for power over *him* She had se im, as if, unable to equal his value, she could su

oying it, as if the measure of his greatness would thus become measure of hers, as if—he thought with a shudder—as if the

ut remembered her hammering derision of his work, his mills, Metal, his success, he remembered her desire to see him drunk, t once, her attempts to push him into infidelity, her pleasure at thought that he had fallen to the level of some sordid romance, terror on discovering that that romance had been an attainment, t a degradation. Her line of attack, which he had found so ffling had been constant and clear—it was his self-esteem she had

his value
she had
d wanted
collapse,

the same purpose and motive, for the same satisfaction, as ers weave complex systems of philosophy to destroy generations, establish dictatorships to destroy a country so she possessing no apons except femininity, had made it her goal to destroy one n.

Yours was the code of life—he remembered the voice of his st young teacher—what, then, is theirs?

"I have something to tell you!" cried Lillian, with the sound of n impotent rage which wishes that words were brass knuckles

fe's been laid by another man! I've been unfaithful to you do y ar me? I've been unfaithful, not with some great noble lover but th the scummiest louse, with Jim Taggart! Three months ago! Be re your divorce! While I was your wife! While I was still your fe!"

He stood listening like a scientist studying a subject of no per- nal

t the mercy of the action of another

"I've been unfaithful to you! Don't you *hear me*, you stainless uritan? I've slept with Jim Taggart you incorruptible hero! Don't you ?" u hear me? Don't you hear me?" would *have* looked if a stranger He was looking at her as he street with a personal confes-

s of drinks and the comments on the national emergency, "what you want?"

We're here . . . ." said Tinky Holloway, nversation with a view

. . . . ur outstanding ability," Lawson, "and your expert advice on the country's industrial lems"

ts men like you that we need in Washington" said Dr Ferris re's no reason why you should have remained an outsider for ong, when your voice is needed at the top level of national rship"

ie sickening thing about it, thought Rearden was that the ches were only half lies, the other half, in their tone of hysteri urgency, was the unstated wish to have it somehow be true at did you want?' he asked

Why . . to listen to *you*, Mr Rearden," said Wesley Mouch jerk of his features imitating a frightened smile the smile was d, the fear was real. "We we want the benefit of your ion on the nation s industrial crisis"

have nothing to say"

But, Mr Rearden," said Dr Ferris, "all we want is a chance to perate with you"

've told you once, publicly, that I don t co-operate at the point gun."

Can t we bury the hatchet at a time like this?" said Lawson be hingly

The gun? Go ahead."

Jh?"

It's you who're holding it. Bury it, if you think you can"

That . that was just a figure of speech, Lawson explained, king "I was speaking metaphorically '

I wasn t."

Can't we all stand together for the sake of the country in this r of emergency?' said Dr Ferris "Can t we disregard our dif nces of opinion? We're willing to meet you halfway If there s aspect of our policy which you oppose just tell us and we'll e a directive to—"

Cut it, boys I didn't come here to help you pretend that I m not he position I m in and that any halfway is possible between us v come to the point. You ve prepared some new gimmick to ng on the steel industry What is it?

As a matter of fact," said Mouch "we do have a vital question liscuss in regard to the steel industry but but your lan ge, Mr Rearden!"

We don't want to *spring* anything on you," said Holloway "We ed you here to *discuss* it with you"

I came here to take orders Give them"

But, Mr Rearden, we don t want to look at it that t want to give you *orders* We want your *voluntary* c

learden ' it."

es for the sake of the country. The mood of labor in the steel istry is extremely tense at present, Mr. Rearden, it is danger-y explosive and . . . and in order to protect you from . . .) . . ." He stopped.

'es?" said Rearden. "From?"

'rom possible . . . violence, certain measures are necessary, ch . . . Look, Jim"—he turned suddenly to James Taggart—y don't you explain it to Mr. Rearden, as a fellow indus-ist?"

Well, somebody's got to support the railroads," said Taggart mly, not looking at him. "The country needs railroads and ebody's got to help us carry the load, and if we don't get an ase in freight rates—"

No, no, no!" snapped Wesley Mouch "Tell Mr Rearden about working of the Railroad Unification Plan"

Well, the Plan is a full success," said Taggart lethargically, "ex-for the not fully controllable element of time It is only a tion of time before our unified teamwork puts every railroad

[illegible]

ication Plan to do with me?'

But, Mr Rearden," cried Mouch with desperate cheerfulness, 's the pattern we're to follow! *That's* what we called you here iscuss!"

What?"

The *Steel* Unification Plan!"

here was an instant of silence, as of breaths drawn after a plunge rden sat looking at them with a glance that seemed to be a ce of interest.

n view of the critical plight of the steel industry," said Mouch a sudden rush, as if not to give himself time to know what e him uneasy about the nature of Rearden's glance, 'and since is the most vitally, crucially basic commodity, the foundation ur entire industrial structure, drastic measures must be taken preserve the country's steel making facilities, equipment and t" The tone and impetus of public speaking carried him that far no farther "With this objective in view, our Plan is . . . our is . . ."

Our Plan is really very simple," said Tinky Holloway, striving to e it by the gaily bouncing simplicity of his voice We'll lift restrictions from the production of steel and every company produce all it can, according to its ability But to avoid the e and danger of dog-eat-dog competition, all the companies deposit [illegible] into a common pool, to be known [illegible] At the [illegible] otaling [illegible] open- [illegible] *h will*

But Lawson's avid pleasure at the familiar formula of self im lation, vanished abruptly at the sound of Rearden's voice, a cold, der's voice answering "I do"

"It's not Boyle alone who's involved," said Holloway pleadingly he country's economy would not be able to stand a major dis ation at the present moment. There are thousands of Boyle's work suppliers and customers What would happen to them if As-iated Steel

and

ou re richest, safest and strongest industrialist in the country at this ment"

"What about the moment after next?"

"Uh?"

"How long do you expect me to be able to produce at a loss?"

"Oh Mr Rearden, I have complete faith in you!"

"To hell with your faith! How do you expect me to do it?"

"You'll manage!"

"How?"

There was no answer

"We can't theorize about the future" cried Wesley Mouch, "when re's an immediate national collapse to avoid! We've got to save countr ... Rearden's im turba "If you it lik

"Sure ou want, r damn regulations let Orren of Associated Steel—and it from every one of its sixty

"Oh but . . . but we couldn't!" gasped Mouch. "That would be nopoly!"

rently "then let my mills than Boyle" have an advantage over

"Then don't talk about saving the country's economy"

"All we want is—" He stopped.

"All you want is production without men who're able to produce, t it?"

"That . that's theory That's just a theoretical extreme. All want is a temporary adjustment"

"You've been making those temporary adjustments for years n't you see that you've run out of time?"

"That's just theo" His voice trailed off and stopped. "it's not as if ely able quite be-

ica,

that copper crash of theirs has dealt him a severe financial blow So it s only a matter of giving him a chance to recover, a helping hand to bridge the gap, a bit of temporary assistance, nothing more. All we have to do is just equalize the sacrifice—then everybody will recover and prosper"

"You've been equalizing sacrifice for over a hundred"—he stopped —"for thousands of years," said Rearden slowly. "Don't you see that you re at the end of the road?"

"That s just theory!' snapped Wesley Mouch.

Rearden smiled I know your practice," he said softly "It's your theory that I m trying to understand"

He knew that the specific reason behind the Plan was Orren Boyle he knew that the working of an intricate mechanism, operated by pull, threat, pressure, blackmail—a mechanism like an irrational adding machine run amuck and throwing up any chance sum at the whim of any moment—had happened to add up to Boyle's pressure upon these men to extort for him this last piece of plunder He knew also that Boyle was not the cause of it or the essential to consider, that Boyle was only a chance rider, not the builder, of the infernal machine that had destroyed the world, that it was not Boyle who had made it possible, nor any of the men in this room. They, too, were only riders on a machine without a driver, they were trembling hitchhikers who knew that their vehicle was about to crash into its final abyss—and it was not love or fear of Boyle that made them cling to their course and press on toward their end it was something else it was some one nameless element which they knew and evaded knowing, something which was neither thought nor hope, something he identified only as a certain look in their faces, a furtive look saying I can get away with it. Why?—he thought. Why do they think they can?

"We can t afford any theories!" cried Wesley Mouch. "We've got to act!'

"Well, then, I'll offer you another solution. Why don't you take over my mills and be done with it?"

The jolt that shook them was genuine terror.

"Oh no!" gasped Mouch

"We wouldn t think of it!" cried Holloway

"We stand for free enterprise! ' cried Dr Ferris

"We don t want to harm you!" cried Lawson. "We're your friends Mr Rearden Can't we all work together? We're your friends"

There, across the room, stood a table with a telephone, the same table most likely, and the same instrument—and suddenly Rearden felt as if he were seeing the convulsed figure of a man bent over that telephone, a man who had then known what he, Rearden, was now beginning to learn, a man fighting to refuse him the same request which he was now refusing to the present tenants of this room—he saw the finish of that fight, a man's tortured face lifted to confront him and a desperate voice saying steadily "Mr R
to you . by the woman I love . . that I am yo

This was the act he had then called treason,

o whose profit?

"Mr Rearden!" moaned Lawson. "What's the matter?"

He turned his head, saw Lawson's eyes watching him fearfully and guessed what look Lawson had caught in his face

"All right, I'll say it more precisely You want to eat *me* and have me, too How do you propose to do it?"

"I don't know how you can say that, after we've given you every assurance that we consider you of invaluable importance to the country"

You consider u consider me You sit there,

n—that I feed the last of my wealth away until *we all starve together* That much irrationality is not possible to any man or any looter For your own sake—never mind the country's or mine—you must be counting on something What?"

He saw ... on their faces, a peculiar ... t were *he*

atist view

n in b

"There is no such thing as a temporary suicide."

"But it's only for the duration of the emergency! *Only* until the country recovers!"

How do you expect it to recover?"

There was no answer

H ... expect me to produce after I go bankrupt?"

- " said Dr Ferris

- -ly in the tone of

o another man

You ll always be a bum 'You can't help it It s in your blood. Or, to be more scientific you re conditioned that way"

Rearden sat up it was as if he had been struggling to find the secret combination of a lock and felt, at those words, a faint click within as of the first tumbler falling into place

It s only a matter of weathering this crisis," said Mouch, "of giving people a reprieve a chance to catch up"

And then?"

"Then things will improve"

'How?"

There was no answer

"What will improve them?"

There was no answer

"Who will improve them?"

"Christ Mr Rearden people don't just stand still!" cried Holloway 'They do things, they grow, they move forward!"

What people?

Holloway waved his hand vaguely "People," he said.

What people? The people to whom you re going to feed the last of Rearden Steel, without getting anything in return? The people ... produce?"

'Have you anything left to loot? If you didn't see the nature of your policy before—it s not possible that you don't see it *now* Look around you All those damned People's States all over the earth have been existing only on the handouts which you squeezed for them out of this country But you—you have no place left to sponge on or mooch from No country on the face of the globe This was the greatest and last. You've drained it You've milked it dry Of all that irretrievable splendor, I'm only one remnant, the last What will you do you and your People's Globe, after you've finished me? What are you hoping for? What do you see ahead—except plain, stark animal starvation?'

They did not answer They did not look at him Their faces wore ... the plea of a liar

Rearden had felt another click in his mind, the sharper click of e second tumbler connecting the circuits of the lock. He leaned rward. "What are you counting on?" he asked, his tone had hanged, it was low, it had the steady, pressing, droning sound of drill.

"It's only a matter of

—he felt a deafening crash within him, as of a steel door dropng open at the touch of the final tumbler, the one small number mpleting the sum and releasing the intricate lock, the answer unitg all the pieces, the questions and the unsolved wounds of his life. In the moment of

uld demand the irrational and someone somehow would provide If he had accepted the Equalization of Opportunity Bill, if he had cepted Directive 10-289, if he had accepted the law that those o could not equal his ability had the right to dispose of it, that

ly to wish to wish with no concern for the possible—and that

u do something!

He did not know that he had leaped to his feet, that he ring down at James Taggart, seeing in the unbridled shapeles

f his purposeful speed They watched him go past and vanish
to the haze equating earth with night

He saw his mills rising in the darkness, as a black silhouette
gainst a breathing glow The glow was the color of burning gold,
id "Rearden Steel" stood written across the sky in the cool, white
e of crystal

He looked at the long silhouette, the curves of blast furnaces
anding [illegible]

[illegible]

ent of his mind, devoted to his enjoyment of existence, erected
a rational world to deal with rational men If those men had
nished, if that world was gone, if his mills had ceased to serve
s values—then the mills were only a pile of dead scrap to be left
crumble, the sooner the better—to be left, not as an act of trea-
n, but as an act of loyalty to their actual meaning

The mills were still a mile ahead when a small spurt of flame
ught his sudden attention. Among all the shades of fire in the
st spread of structures, he could tell the abnormal and the out-of-
ace this one was too raw a shade of yellow and it was darting
om a spot where no fire had reason to be, from a structure by
e gate of the main entrance

In the next instant, he heard the dry crack of a gunshot, then
ree answering cracks in swift succession, like an angry hand
apping a sudden assailant.

Then the black mass barring the road in the distance took shape,
was not mere darkness and it did not recede as he came closer
-it was a mob squirming at the main gate, trying to storm the
ills

He had [illegible] some with clubs some
[illegible] od
[illegible] ks
[illegible] m
e roots of the structures—he had time to see a human figure twist
g backward and falling from the top of a car—then he sent his
heels into a shrieking curve, turning into the darkness of a side
ad.

He was going at the rate of sixty miles an hour down the ruts of
1 unpaved soil toward the eastern gate of the mills—and the gate
as in sight when the impact of tires on a gully threw the car off
e road, to the edge of a ravine where an ancient slag heap l
t the bottom. With the weight of his chest and elbow on the w
itted against two tons of speeding metal the curve of his
orced the curve of the car to complete its screaming ha
weeping it back onto the road and into the control of

It had taken one instant, but in the next his foot went down on brake, tearing the engine to a stop for in the moment when headlights had swept the ravine, he had glimpsed an oblong sh darker than the gray of the weeds on the slope, and it had seer to him that a brief white blur had been a human hand waving help

Throwing off '
ravine, lumps c
at the dried c
long black form which he could now distinguish to be a hu body A scum of cotton was swimming against the moon, he co see the white of a hand and the shape of an arm lying stretched the weeds but the body lay still, with no sign of motion.

Mr Rearden "

It was a whisper struggling to be a cry, it was the terrible so of eagerness fighting against a voice that could be nothing bu moan of pain

He did not know which came first, it felt like a single shock thought that the voice was familiar, a ray of moonlight break through the cotton the movement of falling down on his knees the white oval of a face, and the recognition It was the Wet Nu

He felt the boy s hand clutching his with the abnormal strength agony while he was noticing the tortured lines of the face t drained lips the glazing eyes and the thin, dark trickle from a sm black hole in too wrong too close a spot on the left side of t boy's chest

'Mr Rearden . I wanted to stop them . . . I wanted to st you "

"What happened to you, kid?'

Listen, they—

"You need help Let s get you to a hospital and—"

'No! Wait! I I don t think I have much time left to me a . . and I've got to tell you Listen, that riot . . . it s stag . . on orders from Washington . It's not workers . . *your* workers it's those new boys of theirs and . . and a k of goons hired on the outside Don t believe a word they tell you about it Its a frame-up . . . it's *their* rotten kind frame up "

There was a desperate intensity in the boy's face the intensity a crusader
some fuel
that the gre

"They they ve got a Steel Unification Plan ready . . . they need an excuse for it . because they know that the count won t take it and you won't stand for it . . . They're this one s going to be too much for everybody . .
skin you alive, that s all . . . So they want to
starving your workers . and the work

amuck and you re unable to control them and the government s

the intermittent fits of moonlight he could see the trail of flat d weeds and glistening smears going off into the darkness below dreaded to think how far the boy had crawled and for how long

They didn't want you to be here tonight Mr Rearden They n't want you to see their People s rebellion Afterwards you know how they screw up the evidence there won t a straight story to get anywhere and they hope to fool the ntry anc lence D I the country I them that I told you it s under oath I swear it t makes it legal doesn t it? doesn t it? that gives you hance?"

Rearden pressed the boy s hand in his "Thank you kid"

"I I m sorry I m late, Mr Rearden, but but they didn t me in on it till the last minute till just before it started They called me in on a a strategy conference there s a man there by the name of Peters from the Unification ard he s a stooge of Tinky Holloway who s a stooge Orren Boyle What they wanted from me was they nted me to sign a lot of passes to let some of the goons in so they d start trouble from the inside and the outside together to make it look like they really were your workers I used to sign the passes"

"You d d? After they d let you in on their game?"

"But but, of course Mr Rearden Did you think I d y *that k nd* of game?"

"No kid, no I guess not. Only—"

"What?"

"Only that s when you stuck your neck out"

"But I had to!

How long w y broke yours? it s how I had to keep it? You n Mr Rearden?"

"Yes, I do"

"I refused them I ran out of the office I ran to look r the superintendent to tell him everything but I uldn't find him and then I heard shots at the main gate and knew it had started I tried to phone your home the one wires were cut I ran to get my car I wanted to rea h u or a policeman or a newspaper or somebody but they ust have been following me that s when they shot me the parking lot . . . from behind all I remember is

and and then when I opened my eyes, they had dumped
here on the slag heap

On the slag heap?' said Rearden slowly, knowing that the h
was a hundred feet below

The boy nodded pointing vaguely down into the darkness "Y
down there And then I I started crawling
crawling up I wanted I wanted to last till I told so
body who d tell you The pain twisted lines of his face smooth

Rearden s arm the eyes closing the mouth relaxing as it
hold a moment s profound contentment But you can t stop the
You re not through You ve got to hang on till I get you to a doct
and— He was lifting the boy cautiously, but a convulsion of pa
ran through the boy s face his mouth twisting to stop a cry—an
Rearden had to lower him gently back to the ground.

The boy shook h s head with a glance that was almost apology
won t make it Mr Rearden No use fooling myself
know I m through

Then as if by some dim recoil against self pity he added recit
a memorized lesson his voice a desperate attempt at his old
cynical intellectual tone What does it matter Mr Rearden?
Man is only a collection of conditioned chemicals and
man's dying doesn t make any more difference than an an
mal s

"You know better than that."

"Yes he whispered Yes I

fac
kn
eve ... said about living or or dying Dying
it wouldn t make any difference to chemicals but—" he
stopped and all of his desperate protest was only in the intens ty of
his voice dropping lower to say "—but it does to me And
and I guess it makes a difference to an animal too But
they said there are no values only social customs No
values!" His hand clutched blindly at the hole in his chest, as if try
ing to hold that which he was losing No values "

Then his eyes opened wider with the sudden calm of full frank
ness "I d like to live Mr Rearden God how I d like to!" His
voice was passionately quiet Not because I m dying but be
cause I've just discovered it tonight what it means really to be
alive And it s funny do you know I d scovered
it? In the office when I stuck my when I
told the bastards to go to hell There s
ngs I wish I d known sooner But use
ig over spilled milk." He saw Rearden s

flattened trail below and added, "Over spilled anything, Mr
rden."
Listen kid," said Rearden sternly, "I want you to do me a favor"
Now Mr Rearden?"
Yes Now"
Why, of course Mr Rearden . . . if I can."
You've done me a big favor tonight, but I want you to do a still

You ... Rearden
'For me Because I m asking you to Because I want you to
... together you and I"

ast
Vill

ent
gerness of the answer, the voice was only a whisper I ll try, Mr
earden."
"Now help me to get you to a doctor Just relax, take it easy and
me lift you"
"Yes Mr Rearden." With the jerk of a sudden effort, the boy
lled himself up to lean on an elbow
"Take it easy, Tony"
... old,

... Tony, that s an absolute
Reard ... a long cautious effort he saw the

... Wet Nurse now?"
"I guess I am"
He took the first steps up the slant of crumbling soil his
tensed to the task of shock absorber for his fragile burden
task of maintaining a steady progression where there ...
hold to find
The boy ... on Rearden s shoulder,

as if this were a presumption Rearden bent down and pressed lips to the dust-streaked forehead

The boy jerked back, raising his head with a shock of incredulc indignant astonishment "Do you know what you did?" he wl pered, as if unable to believe that it was meant for him

of faint, spaced rhythmic shudders to show it, Rearden knew the boy was crying—crying in surrender, in admission of all things which he could not put into the words he had never found

take the form of a gentle, unhurried flow

He heard no sobs but he felt the rhythmic shudders and throu the cloth of his shirt in place of tears he felt the small wa liquid spurts flung from the wound by the shudders He knew the tight pressure of his arms was the only answer which the b was now able to hear and understand—and he held the trembl body as if the strength of his arms could transfuse some part his living power into the arteries beating ever fainter against him.

Then the sobbing stopped and the boy raised his head. His fa seemed thinner and paler but the eyes were lustrous, and he lool up at Rearden straining for the strength to speak

"Mr Rearden I I liked you very much."

"I know it."

The boy's features had no power to form a smile but it was smile that spoke in his glance as he looked at Rearden's face— he looked at that which he had not known he had been seekn

ge of that whi

sion in his fac

out there was

brief stab of convulsion in his body, like a last cry of protest

was a desire to kill

The desire was not directed at the unknown thug who had se a bullet through the boy's body, or at the looting bureaucrats wh hired the thug to do it but at the boy's teachers who h vered him, disarmed, to the thug's gun—at the soft, safe assass

llege classrooms who, incompetent to answer the queries of a for reason, took pleasure in crippling the young minds en-d to their care

mewhere, he thought, there was this boy's mother, who had lled with protective concern over his groping steps, while teach-um to walk, who had measured his baby formulas with a ers caution ... the latest

ess fatal.

thought of all the living species that train their young in the

... evil, before he has started to think

... who are you to want to escape a thug's bullet ...

aw a mother bird pluck g then pushing him out at was what they did to

... this boy had been ed through a wildered pro- his mangled

a different breed of teachers had once existed, he thought, ... he thought that en like Hugh

ng the guards went through the gate of the ... he did

the odor of antiseptics, he deposited his burden on a bench, no word of explanation to anyone, and walked out, not glancing hind him

He walked in the direction of the front gate, toward the g of fire and the bursts of guns He saw, once in a while, a few fig running through the cracks between structures or darting bef black corners, pursuec
astonished to notice th
to have subdued the h
at the front gate remained to be beaten. He saw a loul scu across a patch of lamplight, swinging a length of pipe at a wall glass panes battering them down with an animal relish, danc like a gorilla to the sound of crashing glass, until three hu human figures descended upon him, carrying him writhing to ground

The siege of the gate appeared to be ebbing, as if the spine of

On the roof of a structure above the gate, he saw, as he closer the slim silhouette of a man who held a gun in each ha and, from behind the protection of a chimney, kept firing at in vals down into the mob, firing swiftly and, it seemed, in two di tions at once, like a sentinel protecting the approaches to the ga The confident skill of his movements, his manner of firing, with time wasted to take aim, but with the kind of casual abruptness th

peering in his direction The man waved to someone to replace h then vanished abruptly from his post.

Rearden hurried on through the short stretch of darkness ahea —but then, from the side, from the crack of an alley, he heard drunken voice yell, "There he is!" and whirled to see two be figures advancing upon him He saw a leering, mindless face wi a mouth hung loose in a joyless chuckle, and a club in a ra fist—he heard the sound of running steps approaching from anoth direction he attempted to turn his head, then the club crashe down on his skull from behind—and in the moment of splitti darkness

and distant, as if he had fall
His first awareness, when he opened
profound serenity. Then he saw that he

modern, sternly gracious room—then he realized that it was his office and that the two men standing beside him were the mills'

office were
ombination
job nor his business er, nor his

"I think I'll be all right, Doctor," he said, raising his head

and allow yourself to rest.

e mills beyond
the run You

do, Doctor." rk left for you

"Oh yes! I never thought I'd live to see the day when—"
"I know Go ahead, take care of it. I'll be all right.'
"Yes, Mr Rearden."
"I'll take care of the place," said the superintendent as the doctor turned out. "Everything's under control, Mr Rearden But it was the dirtiest—"

d my life? Some

ads off That was
furnace foreman of ours Been here two months Best I've ever had He's the one who got wise to what the gravy boys were planning and warned me, this afternoon Told me to arm our
from the police or the
laciest delays
the goons
ent expecting any armed resistance urnace foreman—Frank Adams is his name—who organized our defense, ran the *whole* battle, and stood on a roof picking off the scum *that* came too close to the gate Boy, what a marksman! I shudder to think how many of our lives he saved tonight *Those bastards were for blood,* Mr Rearden."
"I'd like to see him."
"He's waiting somewhere outside It's he who brought you here, to you when possible"
ke charge finish the job
u, Mr Rearden?"

nothing else.
He lay still, alone in the silence of his office He knew ning of his mills had ceased to exist, and the ful

knowledge left no room for the pain of regretting an illusion. had seen, in a final image, the soul and essence of his enemies mindless face of the thug with the club It was not the face it that made him draw back in horror, but the professors, the philc phers the moralists, the mystics who had released that face u the world

He felt a peculiar cleanliness It was made of pride and of l for this earth, this earth which was his not theirs It was the f ing which had moved him through his life, the feeling which sc among men know in their youth, then betray, but which *he* l

certainty that his life was his, to be lived with no bondage to e and that that bondage had never been necessary It was the radi serenity of knowing that he was free of fear, of pain, of guilt.

If it s true, he thought, that there are avengers who are work for the deliverance of men like me, let them see me now, let th tell me their secret, let them claim me, let them—'Come in!" said aloud in answer to the knock on his door

The door opened and he lay still The man standing on threshold with disheveled hair a soot-streaked face and furna smudged arms dressed in scorched overalls and bloodstained sh standing as if he wore a cape waving behind him in the wind v Francisco d Anconia

It seemed to Rearden that his consciousness shot forward ahe of his body, it was his body that refused to move, stunned by sho while his mind was laughing telling him that this was the m natural, the most to-have been expected event in the world.

resistibly right.

"You've been torturing yourself for months " said Francisco proaching him, "wondering what words you'd use to ask my fo giveness and whether you had the right to ask it if you ever saw again—but now you see that it isn t necessary, that there's nothi to ask or to forgive "

his hand over Rearden's forehead. It was like a healing touch th closed the past

"There s only one thing I want to tell you," said Rearden. want you to hear it from me you kept your oath, you friend "

"I knew that you knew it. You knew it from the no matter what you thought of my actions

use you could not force yourself to doubt it."
That " whispered Rearden, staring at him "*that* was the g I had no right to tell you no right to claim as my ex

Didn t you suppose I d understand it?"
I wanted to find you I had no right to look for you all that time you were— He pointed at Francisco s clothes his hand dropped helplessly and he closed his eyes
I was your furnace foreman " said Francisco grinning I didn t k you d mind that. You offered me the job yourself
You've been here as my bodyguard for two months?"
Yes."
You've been here ever since—" He stopped
That s right. On the morning of the day when you were reading farewell message over the roofs of New York I was reporting for my first shift as your furnace foreman "
Tell me " said Rearden slowly that night at James Taggart s d ng when you said that you were after your greatest con st you meant me didn't you?
Of course."
Francisco drew himself up a little as if for a solemn task his earnest, the smile remaining only in his eyes I have a great to tell you " he said "But first, will you repeat a word you offered me and I I had to reject, because I knew that I not free to accept it?"
Rearden smiled "What word *Francisco?*"
Francisco inclined his head in acceptance and answered 'Thank *Hank* " Then he raised his head Now I ll tell you the things ad come to say but did not finish that night when I came for the first time. I think you're ready to hear it."
I am.
The glare of steel being poured from a furnace shot to the sky ond the window A red glow went sweeping slowly over the ls of the office over the empty desk, over Rearden s face, as if salute and farewell.

apter VII "THIS IS JOHN GALT SPEAKING'

The doorbell was ringing like an alarm in a long demand ng am broken by the impatient stabs of someone s frantic finger
Leaping out of bed Dagny noticed the cold pale sunlight of late ning and a clock on a distant spire marking the hour of ten. had worked at the office till four A.M and had left word not to ect her till noon.
The white face ungroomed by panic that confronted her when threw the door open, was James Taggart.
He s gone!" he cried.
Who?"
Hank Rearden! He s gone quit vanished d sappeared!"
he stood still for a moment, holding the belt of the c

gown she had been tying, then, as the full knowledge reached h
her hands jerked the belt tight—as if snapping her body in two
the waistline—while she burst out laughing It was a sound
triumph

He stared at her in bewilderment "What's the matter with you
he gasped 'Haven't you understood?"

Come in, Jim, she said, turning contemptuously, walking in
the living room Oh yes, I've understood"

He s quit! Gone! Gone like all the others! Left his mills,
bank accounts his property everything! Just vanished! Took so
clothing and whatever he had in the safe in his apartment—th
found a safe left open in his bedroom, open and empty—that's
No word no note no explanation! They called me from Was
ington but it s all over town! The news, I mean, the story! Th
can t keep it [illegible]
it got out, but [illegible]
break-outs, th [illegible]
could stop it, [illegible]
the chief metallurgist the chief engineer, Rearden's secretary,
the hospital doctor! And God knows how many others! Desertin
the bastards! Deserting us in spite of all the penalties we've set u
He s quit and the rest are quitting and those mills are just le
there, standing still! Do you understand what that means?"

"Do *you?*' she asked

He had thrown his story at her, sentence by sentence, as if tryi
to knock the smile off her face, an odd, unmoving smile of bitte
ness and triumph, he had failed. 'It's a national catastrophe! What
the matter with you? Don t you see that it's a fatal blow? It wi
break the last of the country's morale and economy! We can
let him vanish! You've got to bring him back!"

Her smile disappeared

"*You* can! he cried "You're the only one who can! He's you
lover, isn t he? Oh don't look like that! It s no time f
squeamishness! It s no time for anything except that we've got t
have him! You must know where he is! You can find him! Yo
must reach him and bring him back!"

The way she now looked at him was worse than her smile—sh
looked as if she were seeing him naked and would not endure th
sight much longer "I can't bring him back," she said, not raisin
her voice "And I wouldn't, if I could. Now get out of here."

"But the national catastrophe—"

"Get out."

She did not notice his exit. She stood alone in the middle of he
living room, her head dropping, her shoulders sagging, while she wa
smiling a smile of pain, of tenderness, of greeting to Han
Rearden. She [illegible] feel so glad that h
[illegible] ght, and yet refuse
[illegible] ere beating in he
[illegible] e

It was strange—she thought, in the days that followed, looking at the men around her—that catastrophe had made them aware of Hank Rearden with an intensity that his achievements had not

with the same belligerence and on the same dates "It is social treason to ascribe too much importance to Hank Rearden's desertion and to undermine public morale by the old fashioned belief that an individual can be of any significance to society" "It is social treason to spread rumors about the disappearance of Hank Rearden. Mr Rearden has not disappeared, he is in his office, running his mills, as usual, and there has been no trouble at Rearden Steel, except a minor disturbance, a private scuffle among some workers."

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Mr

Boyl

le, at

York, in

thered in

the doors

is meager

shing his

run-down

while the

being re-

all manu-

hy d

loom

it sooner? Why hadn't they

She found no

she had called to his struggling airplane, but no signal could rea
her through that screen

Yet the screen split open for one brief break—for the length of
letter she received a week after he vanished The envelope bore
return address only the postmark of some hamlet in Colorado. T
letter contained two sentences

I have met him I don t blame you

H R.

She sat still for a long time looking at the letter, as if unable
move or to feel She felt nothing she thought, then noticed that l
her grasp

knowledge that her blankness was a struggle not to hear the
Had he

around her but of the tunnels below under the floors of the buil
ing—and she had worked, feeling as if some marginal part of h
brain was computing figures, reading reports making decisions in
rush of lifeless activity while her living mind was inactive and st
frozen in contemplation forbidden to move beyond the sentenc
He s down there. The only inquiry she had permitted herself h
been a glance at the payroll list of the Terminal workers She h
seen the name Galt, John. The list had carried it, openly, for ov
twelve years She had seen an address next to the name—and, for
month had struggled to forget it.

now as
ard
s h
the

was nothing except a question that was not to be asked His presen
in the tunnels had been her motor through those days—just as h
presence in the city had been her motor through the months of th
summer—just as his presence somewhere in the world had be
her motor through the years before she ever heard his name No
she felt as if her motor too had stopped

She went on, with the bright pure glitter of a five-dollar gold piec
which she kept in her pocket, as her last drop of fuel She went o
protected from the world around her by a last armor indifference

The newspapers did not mention the outbreaks of violence th
had begun to burst across the country—but she watched the
through the reports of train conductors about bullet riddled car
tracks, attacked trains besieged stations, in

egon, in Texas, in Montana—the futile, doomed outbreaks,

There cal of llectors

in the chaos of no rule save that of the gun, to perish under the

Rumors went spreading through the country in whispers of cynical terror—yet people read the newspapers and acted as if they believed what the ... the others on who would

the mountain ignored the sudden fissures, the black fumes, the boiling trickles, and went on believing that their only danger was to acknowledge the reality of these signs

"Listen to Mr. Thompson's report on the world crisis, November 22!"

It was the first acknowledgment of the unacknowledged. The announcements began to appear a week in advance and went ringing

Don't forget Mr. Thompson on November ... tions at the end of every program "Mr Thompson will ... the truth!" said placards in subways and buses—then ...

walls of buildings—then billboards on deserted highways

"Don t despair! Listen to Mr Thompson!" said pennants on government cars Don t give up! Listen to Mr Thompson!" said banners in offices and shops Have faith! Listen to Mr Thompson!" said voices in churches Mr Thompson will give you the answer!" wrote army airplanes across the sky the letters dissolving in space, and only the last two words remaining by the time the sentence was completed

Public loud-speakers were built in the squares of New York for the day of the speech and came to rasping life once an hour in time with the ringing of distant clocks to send over the worn rattle of the traffic over the heads of the shabby crowds the sonorous mechanical cry of an alarm toned voice "Listen to Mr Thompson s report on the world crisis November 22!"—a cry rolling through the frosted air and vanishing among the foggy roof tops under the blank page of a calendar that bore no date.

On the afternoon of November 22 James Taggart told Dagny that Mr Thompson wished to meet her for a conference before the broadcast

"In Washington? she asked incredulously, glancing at her watch.

"Well I must say that you haven t been reading the newspapers or keeping track of important events Don't you know that Mr Thompson is to broadcast from New York? He has come here to confer with the leaders of industry as well as of labor science the professions and the best of the country s leadership in general. He has requested that I bring you to the conference."

"Where is it to be held?"

"At the broadcasting studio "

"They don t except me to speak on the air in support of their policies do they?

"Don t worry they wouldn't let *you* near a microphone! They just want to hear your opinion and you can t refuse, not in a national ... Thompson in per-

"Not much time to give to a conference about a national emergency is it?"

... don t argue don't ... pted ... iture ... ring

Edd e W llers along with me "

He frowned cons dering it for a moment with a look of annoyance more than anxiety "Oh, all right, if you wish " he snapped, shrugg ng.

She came to the broadcasting studio with James Taggart as a pol ceman at one side of her and Eddie Willers as a bodyguard at the other Taggart s face was resentful and tense Eddie s—res gned, wondering and curious A stage set of pasteboard walls had been

erected in a corner of the vast, dim space, representing a stuffily traditional suggestion of a cross between a stately drawing room and a modest study A semicircle of empty armchairs filled the set, suggesting a grouping from a family album, with microphones dangling like bait at the end of long poles extended for fishing among the chairs

The best leadership of the country, that stood about in nervous clusters had the look of a remnant sale in a bankrupt store she saw Wesley Mouch, Eugene Lawson, Chick Morrison, Tinky Holloway, Dr Floyd Ferris, Dr S [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]oon.

But the figure that gave her an instant s shock was Dr Robert Stadler She had not known that a face could age so greatly within the brief space of one year the look of timeless energy, of boyish eagerness, was gone and nothing remained of the face except the lines of contemptuous bitterness He stood alone apart from the others and she saw the moment when his eyes saw her enter, he looked like a man in a whorehouse who had accepted the nature of his surroundings until suddenly caught there by his wife it was a look of guilt in the process of becoming hatred Then she saw Robert Stadler, the scientist, turn away as if he had not seen her —as if his refusal to see could wipe a fact out of existence

Mr Thompson was pacing among the groups snapping at random bystanders in the restless manner of a man of action who feels contempt for the duty of making speeches He was clutching a sheaf of typewritten pages, as if it were a bundle of old clothing about to be discarded.

James Taggart caught him in mid step to say uncertainly and loudly, "Mr Thompson, may I present my sister Miss Dagny Taggart?"

"So nice of you to come, Miss Taggart " said Mr Thompson shaking her hand as if she were another voter from back home whose name he had never heard before then he marched briskly off

"Where's the conference, Jim?" she asked and glanced at the clock it was a huge white dial with a black hand slicing the minutes, like a k[illegible]

[illegible] pped.

[illegible] terly patient aston-ish

A radio receiver was playing a program o[illegible] military marches broadcast from another studio half-drowning the fragments of nervous voices, of hastily aimless steps of screeching machinery being pulled to focus upon the drawing room set.

"[illegible] report on the world crisis at [illegible] om the radio [illegible] f 7 45 [illegible] on, while [illegible]

radio burst into another march

It was 7 50 when Chick Morrison, the Morale Conditioner who seemed to be in charge cried All right, boys and girls all right, lets take our places! waving a bunch of notepaper like a baton toward the light flooded circle of armchairs

Mr Thompson thudded down upon the central chair in the manner of grabbing a vacant seat in a subway

Chick Morrisons assistants were herding the crowd toward the circle of light

A

see u

The

gasp

He shrugged and went on —happy family Hurry up boys Take close ups of Mr Thompson first

The hand of the clock went slicing off the minutes while press photographers clicked their cameras at Mr Thompsons sourly impatient face

Mr Thompson will sit between science and industry!" Chick Morrison announced Dr Stadler please—the chair on Mr Thompsons left Miss Taggart—this way please—on Mr Thompsons right

Dr Stadler obeyed She did not move

Its not just for the press its for the television audences,"

inducement.

n this program"

f look he would

refused to perform its part.

"Dagny for Christs sake!" cried James Taggart in panic.

"Whats the matter with her? asked Mr Thompson.

"But Mss Taggart Why? cr ed Chick Morrison

You all know why she said to the faces around her "You should have known better than to try that again."

"Mss Taggart yelled Chick Morrison as she turned to go "It's a national emer—"

Then a man came rushing toward Mr Thompson and she stopped, as did everyone else—and the look on the mans face swept the crowd into an abruptly total silence He was the stations chief eng neer and ve terror struggling

t have to delay the

What? cried Mr Thompson

The hand of the d al stood at 7 58

"We re trying to fix it, Mr Thompson, we re trying to find out what it is

"What

"We re

"I don't know! But . . . We . . . we can't get on the air, Mr Thompson."

There was a moment of silence, then Mr Thompson asked, his voice unnaturally low, "Are you crazy?"

"I must be I wish I were I can t make it out. The station is dead."

"Mechanical trouble?" yelled Mr Thompson, leaping to his feet. "Mechanical trouble, God damn you, at a time like this? If thats how . . ."

. . . wly, in the manner of an . . . "It s not this station, Mr . . . n the country, as far . . . mechanical trouble . . . in order, in perfect . . . but all radio stations . . . and nobody can dis-

"But—" cried Mr Thompson, stopped glanced about him and screamed, "Not tonight! You can t let it happen tonight! You've got to get me on the air!"

"Mr Thompson," the man said slowly, "we've called the electronic laboratory of the State Science Institute They they ve never seen anything like it. They said it might be a natural phenomenon, some sort of cosmic disturbance of an unprecedented kind, only—"

"Well?"

"Only they don t think it is We don't, either They said it looks like radio waves, but of a frequency never produced before, never observed anywhere, never discovered by anybody"

No one answered him. In a moment, he went on his voice oddly solemn "It looks like a wall of radio waves jamming the air, and we can't get through it, we can t touch it, we can t break it Whats more we can't locate its source not by any of our usual . . . from a transmitter that . . . childs toy!"

. . . n behind Mr Thompson . . . artled by its note of peculiar terror, it came from Dr Stadler . . . heres no such thing! There . . . make it!"

"That's it, Dr Stadler," . . . houldn't be possible But . . .

"Well, do something about it!" cried Mr Thompson to the crowd at large.

No one answered or moved.

"I . . . Mr Thompson. "I won't permit it! To- . . . speech! Do something! . . . it!" . . . ankly . . . very electronic engineer . . . the lot of you . . . in the country! I'll put the whole profession on trial for sabo . . . desertion and treason! Do you hear me? Now do something damn you! Do something!"

The chief engineer was looking at him impassively, as if words were not conveying anything any longer

Isn t there anybody around to obey an order?" cried Mr Thompson Isn t there a brain left in this country?

The hand of the clock reached the dot of 8 00

Ladies and gentlemen said a voice that came from the radio receiver—a man s clear calm implacable voice the kind of voice that had not been heard on the airwaves for years— Mr Thompson will not speak to you tonight His time is up I have taken it over You were to hear a report on the world crisis That is what you are going to hear

Three gasps of recognition greeted the voice but nobody had the power to notice them among the sounds of the crowd which were beyond the stage of cries One was a gasp of triumph another—of terror the third—of bewilderment. Three persons had recognized the speaker Dagny Dr Stadler Eddie Willers Nobody glanced at Eddie Willers but Dagny and Dr Stadler glanced at each other She saw that his face was distorted by as evil a terror as one could ever bear to see he saw that she knew and that the way she looked at him was as if the speaker had slapped his face

"For twelve years you have been asking Who is John Galt? This is John Galt speaking I am the man who loves his life I am the man who does not sacrifice his love or his values I am the man who has deprived you of victims and thus has destroyed your world and if you wish to know why you are perishing—you who dread knowledge—I am the man who will now tell you.

The chief engineer was the only one able to move he ran to a television set and struggled frantically with its dials But the screen remained empty the speaker had not chosen to be seen Only his voice filled the airways of the country—of the world thought the chief engineer—sounding as if he were speaking here in this room [illegible] addressing a

[illegible] You

[illegible] had

no meaning You have cried that man s sins are destroying the world and you have cursed human nature for its unwillingness to practice the virtues you demanded Since virtue to you consists of sacrifice you have demanded more sacrifices at every successive disaster In the name of a return to morality you have sacrificed all those evils which you held as the cause of your plight You have sacrificed justice to mercy You have sacrificed independence to unity You have sacrificed reason to faith. You have sacrificed wealth to need. You have sacrificed self-esteem to self-denial You have sacrificed happiness to duty

"You have destroyed all that which you held to be evil and achieved all that which you held to be good Why, then do you shrink in horror from the sight of the world around you? That world is not the product of your sins it is the product and the image of your virtues It is your moral ideal brought into reality in its final perfection. You have fought for it, you have

it you have wished it, and I—I am the man who has granted your wish.

"Your ideal had an implacable enemy, which your code of moral was designed to destroy I have withdrawn that enemy I have ... ave removed ... one I have ... eprived your

... idrawn those ... the mind is impotent you say I have ... idrawn those ose mind isn t. There are values higher than the mind you say? ave withdrawn those for whom there aren t

"While yo ... altars the men of ... lf-esteem—I beat ... ture of the game ... te of yours which ... been too innocently generous to grasp I showed them the y to live by another morality—mine It is mine that they chose to low

"All the men who have vanished the men you hated yet dreaded ose, it is I who have taken them away from you Do not attempt find us We do not choose to be found Do not cry that it is our y to serve you We do not recognize such duty Do not cry that need us We do not consider need a claim Do not cry that you n us You don't Do not beg us to return We are on strike we men of the mind

"We are on strike against self immolation We are on strike against creed of unearned rewards and unrewarded duties We are on ike against the dogma that the pursuit of one s happiness is evil are on strike against the doctrine that life is guilt

"There is a difference between our strike and all those you've ... nds ... We ... ing

your economics We have chosen not to exploit you ... er are dangerous and to be shackled according to your politics ...

orld without mind

"We have granted you everything you demanded of us we who ... it We have ... ut, no com ... ot need you ... wanted? A ... t want us to ... ways known ... use now we

ow it, too

"Through centuries of scourges and disasters brought about by

your code of morality, you have cried that your code had broken, that the scourges were punishment for breaking it, men were too weak and too selfish to spill all the blood it requ. You damned man you damned existence, you damned this e but never dared to question your code Your victims took the bl and struggled on with your curses as reward for their martyrdo while you went on crying that your code was noble, but human ture was not good enough to practice it And no one rose to the question Good?—by what standard?

"You wanted to know John Galt s identity I am the man has asked that question.

"Yes this *is* an age of moral crisis Yes you *are* bearing pu ment for your evil But it is not man who is now on trial and not human nature that will take the blame It is your moral that s through this time Your moral code has reached its cli the blind alley at the end of its course And if you wish to g living what you now need is not to *return* to morality—you have never known any—but to *discover* it.

"You have heard no concepts of morality but the mystical or social You have been taught that morality is a code of behavior posed on you by whim the whim of a supernatural power or whim of society to serve God s purpose or your neighbor s wel to please an authority beyond the grave or else next door—but

"For centuries the battle of morality was fought between who claimed that your life belongs to God and those who cla that it belongs to your neighbors—between those who preached the good is self-sacrifice for the sake of ghosts in heaven and who preached that the good is self-sacrifice for the sake of competents on earth And no one came to say that your life bel to you and that the good is to live it.

"Both sides agreed that morality demands the surrender of self interest and of your mind, that the moral and the practical opposites that morality is not the province of reason but province of faith and force Both sides agreed that no rat morality is possible that there is no right or wrong in reason— in reason there s no reason to be moral

"Whatever else they fought about, it was against man's mind all your moralists have stood united It was man s mind that all schemes and systems were intended to despoil and destroy choose to perish or to learn that the anti mind is the anti-life.

"Man s mind is his basic tool of survival. Life is given to survival . . . is not.

ve it. To remain alive, he must think.
ut to think is an act of choice The key to what you so ssly call 'human nature,' the open secret you live with yet l to name is the fact that *man is a being of volitional conscious* Reason does not work automatically, thinking is not a mechani rocess the connections of logic are not made by instinct The ion of your stomach lungs or heart is automatic the function ur mind is not. In any hour and issue of your life you are free ak or to evade that effort. But you are not free to escape from nature from the fact that *reason* is your means of survival—so for *you* who are a human being the question to be or not to the question 'to think or not to think.'
being of volitional consciousness has no automatic course of rior He needs a code of values to guide his actions Value it which one acts to gain and keep, 'virtue is the action by one gains and keeps it. Value' presupposes an answer to the ion of value to whom and for what? 'Value presupposes a ard a purpose and the necessity of action in the face of an iative Where there are no alternatives no values are possible. here is only one fundamental alternative in the universe exist or non-existence—and it pertains to a single class of entities ing organisms The existence of inanimate matter is uncon al the existence of life is not it depends on a specific course ction Matter is indestructible it changes its forms but it ot cease to exist It is only a living organism that faces a con altern
ining
s, it c
nce
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il.
plant must feed itself in order to live the sunlight, the water, hemicals it needs are the values its nature has set it to pursue, fe is the standard of value directing its actions But a plant no choice of action there are alternatives in the conditions it nters h t he f ... t on it acts auto- a destruction- senses provide knowledge of
s good for it or evil It has no power to extend its knowl or to evade it In conditions where its knowledge proves in uate, it dies But so long as it lives it acts on its knowledge, automatic safety and no power of choice it is unable to ignore wn good unable to decide to choose the evil and act as its own oyer
Ian has no automatic code of survival His particular distinction all other living species is the necessity to act in the face of natives by means of *volitional choice* He has no automatic ledge of what is good for him or evil what values his life nds on, what course of action it requires Are you prattling t an instinct of self preservation? An *instinct of* ...

ing slaughter on the altars of others, is giving you *death* as your lard. By the grace of reality and the nature of life, man—every

iness proper to man The purpose of morality is to teach you, to suffer and die, but to enjoy yourself and live

sweep aside those parasites of subsidized classrooms, who live the profits of the mind of others and proclaim that man needs morality, no values, no code of behavior They, who pose as ntists and claim that man is only an animal, do not grant him sion in the law of existence they have granted to the lowest sects. They recognize that every living species has a way of val demanded by its nature, they do not claim that a fish can out of water or that a dog can live without its sense of smell—man, they claim, the most complex of beings man can survive y way whatever, man has no identity, no nature, and there s ractical reason why he cannot live with his means of survival oyed, with his mind throttled and placed at the disposal of any s *they* might care to issue

oral choice
tive is that
round you,
an and less
animal, a thing that knows nothing but pain and *drags itself* h its span of years in the agony of unthinking *self*-destruction.
an act of moral choice But
if you *choose* to default,
deficit to some moral man,
the sake of letting you sur-

you do not have to be a ... ut today those who are, are here any longer I have removed *your means* of survival—victims

you wish to know how I have done *it and* what I told them ke them quit, you are hearing it now I told them in essence, statement I am making tonight *They* were men who had l f code, but had not known how great a virtue it

I made them see it. I brought them, not a re-evaluation, b
an identification of their values

"We, the men of the mind, are now on strike against yo
name of a single axiom, which is the root of our moral co
as the root of yours is the wish to escape it the axi
existence exists

"Existence exists—and the act of grasping that statement
two corollary axioms that something exists which one percei
that one exists possessing consciousness, consciousness bei
faculty of perceiving that which exists

"If nothing exists, there can be no consciousness a con
ness with nothing to be conscious of is a contradiction in te
consciousness conscious of nothing but itself is a contradic
terms before it could identify itself as consciousness it had
conscious of something If that which you claim to perceiv
not exist, what you possess is not consciousness

"Whatever the degree of your knowledge, these two—existen
consciousness—are axioms you cannot escape, these two a
irreducible primaries implied in any action you undertake,
part of your knowledge and in its sum, from the first ray o
you perceive at the start of your life to the widest eruditio
might acquire at its end Whether you know the shape of a
or the structure of a solar system, the axioms remain the same
it exists and that you *know* it.

"To exist is to be something, as distinguished from the n
of non-existence, it is to be an entity of a specific nature ma
specific attributes Centuries ago the man who was—no matter
his errors—the greatest of [illegible]
defining the concept of [illegible]
A is A A thing is itself [illegible]
statement I am here to complete it Existence is Identity [illegible]
sciousness is Identification

"Whatever you choose to consider, be it an object, an att
or an action the law of identity remains the same A leaf ca
be a stone at the same time, it cannot be all red and all green a
same time it cannot freeze and burn at the same time. A is A
if you wish it stated in simpler language You cannot have
cake and eat it, too.

"Are you seeking to know what is wrong with the
the d [illegible]
atten [illegible]
face [illegible]
your [illegible] attempt to evade the fact that A
those who taught you to evade it, was to make
is Man

"Man cannot survive except by gaining kn
his only means to gain it Reason is the
identifies and integrates the material provided
of his senses is to give him the evidence of e
[illegible]ying it belongs to his reason his
[illegible]is, but *what* it is must be learned

"All thinking is a process of identification and integration Man
receives a blob of color; by integrating the evidence of his sight
and his touch, he learns to identify it as a solid object, he learns to
identify the object as a table, he learns that the table is made of

is con-
hrough
single
his an-

... is logic, and logic rests on the axiom that existence exists.
... is the art of *non-contradictory identification* A contradiction
not exist. An atom is itself, and so is the universe, neither can
ntradict its own identity, nor can a part contradict the whole.
concept man forms is valid unless he integrates it without con
diction into the total sum of his knowledge To arrive at a con-
diction is to confess an error in one's thinking, to maintain a
tradiction is to abdicate one's mind and to evict oneself from the
lm of reality

"Reality is that which exists the unreal does not exist the unreal

...wledge that you can claim to possess or ask others to consider

dissent from
but a man's
of identifica-
but his own
ral integrity
me separate

...owment opposed to reason—man's reason is his moral faculty.
...rocess of reason is a process of constant choice in answer to the
...tion True or False?—*Right or Wrong?* Is a seed to be planted
...oil in order to grow—right or wrong? Is a man's wound to be
...fected in order to ... —right or wrong? Does the na-

... rational process is a moral ...
any step of it, with nothing to protect *you but your* ...
rity, or you may try to cheat, to fake the evidence and evade
effort of the quest—but if *devotion to truth is the hallmark of*
...ality, then *there is no greater, nobler, more heroic form of de-*
on than the act of a *man who assumes the responsibility* ...
king

That which you call your soul or spirit is your conscio...
that which y... will' is your mind's freedom

or not, the only will you have, your only freedom, the choice that c trols all the choices you make and determines your life and y character

"Thinking is man's only basic virtue, from which all the oth proceed And his basic vice, the source of all his evils, is t nameless act which all of you practice, but struggle never to adu the act of blanking out, the willful suspension of one's conscio ness, the refusal to think—not blindness, but the refusal to see, ignorance, but the refusal to know It is the act of unfocus your mind and inducing an inner fog to escape the responsibility judgment—on the unstated premise that a thing will not exist only you refuse to identify it, that A will not be A so long as y do not pronounce the verdict 'It is' Non-thinking is an act of nihilation, a wish to negate existence, an attempt to wipe reality But existence exists, reality is not to be wiped out, it merely wipe out the wiper By refusing to say 'It is,' you are ref ing to say I am' By suspending your judgment, you are negat your person When a man declares 'Who am I to know?'—he declaring Who am I to live?'

"This, in every hour and every issue, is your basic moral choi thinking or non thinking, existence or non-existence, A or non entity or zero

"To the extent to which a man is rational, life is the pren directing his actions To the extent to which he is irrational, premise directing his actions is death.

"You who prattle that morality is social and that man wo

"If I were to speak your kind of language, I would say that ma only moral commandment is Thou shalt think. But a 'moral co mandment' is a contradiction in terms The moral is the chosen, the forced, the understood, not the obeyed. The moral is the tional, and reason accepts no commandments.

"My morality, the morality of reason, is contained in a sir axiom existence exists—and in a single choice to live The rest p ceeds from these To live, man must hold three things as the supre and ruling values of his life Reason—Purpose—Self-esteem. R son, as his only tool of knowledge—Purpose, as his choice of happiness which that tool must proceed to achieve—Self-esteem, his inviolate certainty that his mind is competent to think and person is worthy of happiness, which means, is worthy of live These three values imply and require all of man's virtues, and his virtues pertain to the relation of existence and conscio tionality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, pr ide.

"Rationality is the recognition of the fact that existence exists, that nothing can alter the truth and nothing can take precedence over ... mind is one's ... -that reason ... oncession to ... it from the ... the alleged ... it destroy- ... wish ... one's

Independence is the recognition of the fact that yours is the responsibility of judgment and nothing can help you escape it—that ... your ... on is ... e ac- ... of his ... n be- ... your ... it you ... fake existence—that man is an indivisible ... in integrated unit of two attributes of matter and consciousness, and that he may permit no breach between body and mind, between action and thought, between his life and his convictions—that, like a judge impervious to public opinion, he may not sacrifice his convictions to the wishes of others, be it the whole of mankind shouting pleas ... that courage and confidence ... form of being ... nfidence is the ... ness ... unreal is unreal ... nor cash is a ... a value by de- ceiving the mind of others is an act of raising your victims to a position higher than reality, where you become a pawn of their blindness, a slave of their non thinking and their evasions, while their intelligence, their rationality, their perceptiveness become the enemies you have to dread and flee—that you do not care to live as a dependent ... on the stupidity of others, ... fool- ... ike of ... e his ... luded ... the

Justice is the recognition ... the character of ... , that character of men as you cannot fake the character of nature, that you must judge all men as conscientiously as you judge inanimate objects, with the same respect for truth, with the same inc... vision, by as pure and as *rational* a process of identificat... every man ... for what he *is* and treated

h has aside for a musty chunk of s
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scrupul
an honor as you bring to financial transactions—that to withl your contempt from men s vices is an act of moral counterfeit and to withhold your admiration from their virtues is an act

tice and only the evil can profit—and that the bottom of the at the end of that road, ... is to pun men for their virtues an ... is the collapse to full de ... death the dedication of ... existence

"Productiveness is your acceptance of morality, your recognit of the fact that you choose to live—that productive work is t process by which man s consciousness controls his existence, a co stant process of acquiring knowledge and shaping matter to fit one purpose of translating an idea into physical form, of remaki the earth in the image of one s values—that *all* work is creati work if done by a thinking ... by a ... from ... wide ... less is ... that to cheat your way into a job bigger than y mind can handle is to become a fear corroded ape on borrowed mo tions and borrowed time, and to settle down into a job that requir less than your mind s full capacity is to cut your motor and sentenc yourself to another kind of motion decay—that your work is th process of achieving your values, and to lose your ambition fo values is to lose your ambition to live—that your body is a ma chine, but your mind is its driver, and you must drive as far as you mind will take you, with achievement as the goal of your road— ... that coasts down ... wreck being towed to the scrap heap, and the man who makes an other man his goal is a hitchhiker no driver should ever pick up— *that* your work is the purpose of your life, and you must speed past any killer who assumes the right to stop you, that any valu you might find outside your work, any other loyalty or love, can be only travelers you choose to share your journey and must be travelers going on their own power in the same direction.

"Pride is the recognition of the fact that you are your own high est value and, like all of man's values, it has to be earned—that of *any* achievements open to you, the one that ... pos sible is the creation of your own character—th our actions, your desires, your emotions are th

premises held by your mind—that as man must produce the physical
values he needs to sustain his life, so he must acquire the values
of character that make his life worth sustaining—that as man is a

its own moral perfection, valuing nothing higher than itself—and

stagnant decay of others

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value

is the
must
rpose
itself.

"Just as your body has two fundamental sensations pleasure and
pain, as signs of its welfare or injury as a barometer of its basic
alternative life or death so your consciousness has two funda
mental emotions, joy and suffering in answer to the same alterna
tive Your emotions are estimates of that which furthers your life
or threatens it, lightning calculators giving you a sum of your profit
or loss You have no choice about your capacity to feel that some-
thing is good for you or evil but *what* you will consider good or
evil what will give you joy or pain what you will love or hate
desire or fear depends on your standard of value Emotions are
... their content is dictated by your mind
values are the
nix of contra
nsmission
nachine
wreck you on your first attempt to move
you the driver have corrupted.
"If you hold the irrational as your standard of value
possible ... concept of the good, if you long for

have not earned for a fact as as a la . . . don't do ... for a loophole in the . your whim if . . . . it Do not cry, happiness is impossible to man, check your fuel it brought you where you wanted to go

"Happiness is not to be achieved at the command of emotional whims Happiness is not the satisfaction of whatever irrational wishes you might blindly attempt to indulge Happiness is a state of non-contradictory joy—a joy without penalty or guilt, a joy that does not clash with any of your values and does not work for your own destruction not the joy of escaping from your mind, but of using your mind s fullest power, not the joy of faking reality, but of achieving values that are real, not the joy of a drunkard, but of a producer Happiness is possible only to a rational man, the ma who desires nothing but rational goals, seeks nothing but ration values and finds his joy in nothing but rational actions

Just as I support my life, neither by robbery nor alms, but b my own effort so I do not seek to derive my happiness from th injury or the favor of others, but earn it by my own achievement Just as I do not consider the pleasure of others as the goal of m life, so I do not consider my pleasure as the goal of the lives o others Just as there are no contradictions in my values and n conflicts among my desires—so there are no victims and no con flicts of interest among rational men, men who do not desire the

except in trade for material values, so he does not give the values of his spirit—his love, his friendship, his esteem—except in payment and in trade for human virtues, in payment for his own selfish pleasure, which he receives from men he can respect The mystic parasites who have, throughout the ages, reviled the traders and held them in contempt, while honoring the beggars and the looters, have known the secret motive of their sneers a trader is the entity they dread—a man of justice

"Do you ask what moral obligation I owe to my fellow men? None—except the obligation I owe to myself, to material objects and to all of existence rationality I deal with men as my nature and theirs demands by means of reason I seek or desire nothing from them except such relations as they care to enter of their own voluntary choice It is only with their mind that I can deal and only for my own self interest, when they see that coincides with theirs When they don t, I enter no ters go their way and I do not swerve fro

by means of nothing but logic and I surrender to nothing but logic I do not surrender my reason or deal with men who surrender theirs. I have noth ng to g

right, he will learn; if I am wrong, I will, one of us will win, but both will profit.

"Whatever may be open to disagreement, there is one act of evil that may not, the act that

man's capacity to live

"Do not open your mouth as if it were the sermon ed has convinced

destroy your own character and can no longer claim the sanction of reason—as no advocate of contradictions can claim it. There can be no 'right' to destroy the source of rights, the only means of judging right and wrong: the mind.

"To force a man to drop his own mind and to accept your will as a substitute with terror in

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others or the moral degenerate who grants to others force his mind That is the moral absolute one does not leave to debate I do not grant the terms of reason to men who to deprive me of reason. I do not enter discussions with

who think they can forbid me to think I do not place my moral sanc tion upon a murderers wish to kill me When a man attempts to deal with me by force I answer him—by force

It is only as retaliation the man who starts its us his concept of morality I the only destruction he h force to seize a value I use it only to destroy destruction A holdup man seeks to gain wealth by killing me I do not grow richer by killing a holdup man I seek no values by means of evil nor do I surrender my values to evil.

In the name of all the producers who had kept you alive and received your death ultimatums in payment I now answer you with a single ultimatum of our own Our work or your guns You can choose either you can t have both We do not initiate the use of force against others or submit to force at their hands If you desire ever again to live in an industrial society it will be on *our* moral terms Our terms and our motive power are the antithesis of yours You have been using fear as your weapon and have been bringing death to man as his punishment for rejecting your morality We offer him life as his reward for accepting ours

You who are worshippers of the zero—you have never discov ered that achieving life is not the equivalent of avoiding death Joy is not the absence of pain intelligence is not the absence of stu pidity light is not 'the absence of darkness' an entity is not 'the absence of a nonentity Building is not done by abstaining from demolition centuries of sitting and waiting in such abstinence will not raise one single girder for you to abstain from demolishing— and now you can no longer say to me the builder Produce and feed us in exchange for our *not* destroying your production I am answering in the name of all your victims Perish with and in your own void Existence is not a negation of negatives Evil not value is an absence and a negation evil is impotent and has no power but that which we let it extort from us Perish because we have learned that a zero cannot hold a mortgage over life

You seek escape from pain We seek the achievement of happi ness You exist for the sake of avoiding punishment. We exist for the sake of earning rewards Threats will not make us funct on fear is not our incentive It is not death that we wish to avoid, but l fe th it we wish to live

"You who have lost the concept of the difference you who claim that fear and joy are incentives of equal power—and secretly add that fear is the more 'practical—you do not wish to live and only fear of death still holds you to the existence you have damned. You dart in panic through the trap of your days looking for the exit you have closed running from a pursuer you dare not name to a terror you dare not acknowledge and the greater your terror the greater your dread of the only act that could save you thinking The purpose of your struggle is not to know not to grasp or name or hear the thing I shall now state to your hearing that yours Moral ty of Death.

"Death is the standard of your values, death is your chosen goal, and you have to keep running, since there is no escape from the pursuer who is out to destroy you or from the knowledge that that pursuer is yourself Stop running for once—there is no place to run—stand naked, as you dread to stand, but as I see you and take a look at what you dared to call a moral code

"Damnation is the start of your morality, destruction is its purpose means and end Your code begins by damning man as evil, then demands that he practice a good which it defines as impossible for him to practice It demands, as his first proof of virtue that he accept his own depravity without proof. It demands that he start, not with a standard of value, but with a standard of evil which is himself, by means of which he is then to define the good the good is that which he is not.

"It does not matter who then becomes the profiteer on his renounced glory and tormented soul, a mystic God with some incomprehensible design or any passer by whose rotting sores are held as some inexplicable claim upon him—it does not matter, the good ...

through the effort of playing to bear responsibility ...
game but the decision is weighted in favor of a tendency that he had no power to escape If the tendency is of his choice, he cannot ...

tree of knowledge—he acquired a mind ...
being It was the knowledge of good and evil—he became a moral being. He was sentenced to earn his bread by his labor—he
a productive being He was sentenced to experience
quired the capacity of sexual enjoyment The evils for
damn him are reason, morality creativeness joy—all it
values of his existence. It is not his vices that their

fall is designed to explain and condemn, it is not his errors that they hold as his guilt but the essence of his nature as man Whatever he was—that robot in the Garden of Eden, who existed without mind without values, without labor, without love—he was not man

"Man's fall, according to your teachers, was that he gained the virtues required to live These virtues, by their standard, are his Sin His evil they charge, is that he's man His guilt, they charge, is that he lives

'They call it a morality of mercy and a doctrine of love for man

No they say they do not preach that man is evil the evil is only that alien object his body No they say they do not wish to kill him they only wish to make him lose his body They seek to help him they say against his pain—and they point at the torture rack to which they've tied him the rack with two wheels that pull him in opposite directions, the rack of the doctrine that splits his soul and body

"They have cut man in two, setting one half against the other They have taught him that his body and his consciousness are two enemies engaged in deadly conflict, two antagonists of opposite natures contrad...

...leads into the freedom of the grave

'They have taught man that he is a hopeless misfit made of two elements, both symbols of death A body without a soul is a corpse a soul without a body is a ghost—yet such is their image of man's nature the battleground of a struggle between a corpse and a ghost a corpse endowed with some evil volition of its own and a ghost endowed with the knowledge that everything known to man is non existent, that only the unknowable exists

'Do you observe what human faculty that doctrine was designed to ignore? It was man's mind that had to be negated in order to make him fall apart Once he surrendered reason he was left at the mercy of two monsters wh... control

of

m

ba

"And as he now crawls through the wreckage, groping blindly for a way to live, your teachers offer him the help of a morality that proclaims that he'll find no solution and must seek no fulfillment on earth. Real existence they tell him, is that which he cannot perceive, true consciousness is the faculty of perceiving the non-existent —and if he is unable to understand it, *that* is the proof that his existence is evil and his consciousness impotent

"As products of the split between man's soul and body, there are two kinds of teachers of the Morality of Death the mystics of spirit and the mystics of muscle, whom you call the spiritu... the materialists, those who believe in consciousness wi...

d those who believe in existence without cons...

:and the surrender of your mind, one to their revelations, the
r to their reflexes. No matter how loudly they posture in the
s of irreconcilable antagonists, their moral codes are alike, and
are their aims in matter—the enslavement of man's body, in
t—the destruction of his mind

The good, say the mystics of spirit, is God, a being whose only
nition is that he is beyond man's power to conceive—a definition
invalidates man's consciousness and nullifies his concepts of
tence The good, say the mystics of muscle, is Society—a thing
ch they define as an organism that possesses no physical form, a
r-being embodied in no one in particular and everyone in
eral except yourself Man's mind, say the mystics of spirit, must
subordinated to the will of God Man's mind, say the mystics of
cle, must be subordinated to the will of Society Man's standard
value, say the mystics of spirit, is the pleasure of God, whose
dards are beyond man's power of comprehension and must be
pted on faith. Man's standard of value, say the mystics of
cle is the ... and man's
... ite The
... bre who
... to ques
... to him
... reward, say the mystics of ... will be
n on earth—to his great-grandchildren.

elfishness—say both—is man's evil Man's good—say both—
give up his personal desires, to deny himself renounce him-
surrender, man's good is to negate the life he lives *Sacrifice*—
both—is the essence of morality, the highest virtue within
s reach.

Whoever is now within reach of my voice, whoever is man
victim, not man the killer, I am speaking at the deathbed of
mind ... hich you re drowning,
... to struggle to hold
... ourself—use it now
... that has destroyed you is sacri... Use the last of your
gth to understand its meaning You re still alive You have a
ce.

Sacrifice' does not mean the rejection of the worthless but of
precious 'Sacrifice' does not mean the rejection of the evil for
sake of the good, but of the good for the sake of the evil
ifice' is the surrender of that which you value in favor of that
h you don't.

f you exchange a penny for a dollar, it is *not* a sacrifice, if you
ange a dollar for a penny, it *is* If you achieve the career you
ed, after years of struggle, it is *not* a sacrifice, if you then
unce it for the sake of a rival it *is* If you own a bottle of milk
give it to your starving child, it is *not* a sacrifice, if you give
your neighbor's child and let your own die, it is

f you give money to help a friend it is *not* a sacrifice if
it to a ... it *is* If you give your friend a

you can afford it is *not* a sacrifice if you give him money a cost of your own discomfort it is only a partial virtue acco to this sort of moral standard if you give him money at the of disaster to yourself—*that* is the virtue of sacrifice in full.

If you renounce all personal desires and dedicate your life those you love you do not achieve full virtue you still reta value of your own which is your love If you devote your life random strangers it is an act of greater virtue If you devote y life to serving men you hate—*that* is the greatest of the virtues can practice

"A sacrifice is the surrender of a value Full sacrifice is surrender of all values If you wish to achieve full virtue, you m seek no gratitude in return for your sacrifice no praise no love, admiration no self-esteem not even the pride of being virtu the faintest trace of any gain dilutes your virtue If you purs course of action that does not taint your life by any joy that br you no value in matter no value in spirit no gain, no profit, reward—if you achieve this state of total zero you have achi the ideal of moral perfection.

"You
by this
but the
closely

"If yo
seeking to be eaten with no values to reject and no wishes to nounce you will not win the crown of sacrifice It is not a sacri to renounce the unwanted. It is not a sacrifice to give your life others if death is your personal desire To achieve the virtue sacrifice you must want to live you must love it, you must b with passion for this earth and for all the splendor it can give yo you must feel the twist of every knife as it slashes your des away from your reach and drains your love out of your body

holds out to you

this life on earth

If you wish to save the last of your dignity do not call your actions a sacrifice that term brands you as immoral. If a mo buys food for her hungry child rather than a hat for herself *not* a sacrifice she values the child higher than the hat but it sacrifice to the kind of mother whose higher value is the hat, would prefer her child to starve and feeds him only from a s of duty If a man dies fighting for his own freedom it is n sacrifice he is not willing to live as a slave but it *is* a sacrifice the kind of man who s willing If a man refuses to sell his co tions it is *not* a sacrifice unless he is the sort of man who has convictions

"Sacrifice could be proper only for those who
s crifice—no values no standards no judgment
sires are irrat onal wh ms bl ndly conceived and
For a man of moral stature whose desires a

sacrifice is the surrender of the right to the wrong, of the to the evil.

e creed of sacrifice is a morality for the immoral—a morality eclares its own bankruptcy by confessing that it can't impart n any personal stake in virtues or values, and that their souls wers of depravity, which they must be taught to sacrifice By n confession, it is impotent to teach men to be good and can ubject them to constant *punishment*.

e you thinking, in some foggy stupor, that it's only *material* that your morality requires you to sacrifice? And *what* do unk are material values? Matter has no value except as a for the satisfaction of human desires Matter is only a f human values To what service are you asked to give the al tools your virtue has produced? To the service of that you regard as evil

e yo... values from matter A man whose values are given no sion in material form, whose existence is unrelated to his whose actions contradict his convictions, is a cheap little tle—*yet that* is the man who obeys your morality and di an but vorker, ist but holds prod matter, who believe that the values of their spirit cannot be it into material reality

you say it is the spirit that such men have renounced? Yes, rse You cannot have one without the other You are an ble entity of matter and consciousness Renounce your con- ness and you become a brute Renounce your body and you e a fake Renounce the material world and you surrender it

d *that* is precisely the goal of your morality the duty that ode demands of you Give to that which you do not enjoy, that which you do not admire submit to that which you er evil—surrender the world to the values of others deny, renounce your *self* Your self is your *mind* renounce it and come a chunk of meat ready for any cannibal to swallow
s your *mind* that they want you to surrender—all those who the creed of sacrifice whatever their tags or their motives, r they demand it for the sake of your soul or *of your body*, r they promise you another life in heaven or a full stomach s earth Those who start by saying It is selfish to pursue

pendent mind that recognizes no authority higher than its ow no value higher than its judgment of truth You are asked to fice your intellectual integrity, your logic, your reason, your s ard of truth—in favor of becoming a prostitute whose is the greatest good for the greatest number

"If you search your code for guidance, for an answer to the tion What *is* the good?—the only answer you will find is *good of others* The good is whatever others wish, whateve feel they feel they wish, or whatever you feel they ought to 'The good of others' is a magic formula that transforms an into gold, a formula to be recited as a guarantee of moral and as a fumigator for any action, even the slaughter of a cont Your standard of virtue is not an object, not an act, not a pri but an *intention* You need no proof, no reasons, no success need not achieve *in fact* the good of others—all you need to is that your motive was the good of others, *not* your own. only definition of the good is a negation the good is the 'not for me'

[illegible]

wish it it s good, if the motive of your action is *your* welfare do it, if the motive is the welfare of others, then anything go

"As this double jointed, double standard morality splits half, so it splits mankind into two enemy camps one is yo other is all the rest of humanity *You* are the only outcast wh no right to wish or live *You* are the only servant, the rest a masters, *you* are the only giver, the rest are the takers, *you* eternal debtor, the rest are the creditors never to be paid off must not question their right to your sacrifice, or the nature o wishes and their needs their right is conferred upon them negative by the fact that they are 'non you'

For those of you who might ask questions, your code prov consolation prize and booby-trap it is for your own happin says that you must serve the happiness of others, the only w achieve your joy is to give it up to others, the only way to a your prosperity is to surrender your wealth to others, the onl to protect your life is to protect all men except yourself— you find no joy in this procedure, it is your own fault a proof [illegible]

in pro[illegible]

such [illegible]

"Y[illegible]

dare not ask the questions But you know the unadmitted refusing to acknowledge what you see, what hidden premise your world You know it, not in honest statement, but as uneasiness within you, while you flounder between guiltily and grudgingly practicing a principle too vicious to

"I, who do not accept the unearned, neither in *guilt*, am here to ask the questions you evaded Wh

he happiness of others, but not your own? If enjoyment is a why is it moral when experienced by others, but immoral experienced by you? If the sensation of eating a cake is a why is it an immoral indulgence in your stomach, but a moral or you to achieve in the stomach of others? Why is it im for you to desire, but moral for others to do so? Why is it al to produce a value and keep it, but moral to give it away? it is not moral for you to keep a value, why is it moral for to accept it? If you are selfless and virtuous when you give it, ey not selfish and vicious when they take it? Does virtue of serving vice? ...

... immoral for them to accept it, provided they are unable to e it, unable to deserve it, unable to give you any value in . It is not immoral for them to enjoy it, provided they do not it *by right*

h is the secret core of your creed, the other half of your standard it is immoral to live by your own effort, but moral by the effort of others—it is immoral to consume your own t, but moral to consume the products of others—it is im to earn, but moral to mooch—it is the parasites who are the justification for the existence of the producers but the ex *of* the parasites is an end in itself—it is evil to profit by ement, but good to profit by sacrifice—it is evil to create own happiness, but good to enjoy it at the price of the blood ers.

... the eaters and the eaten. What standard ... caste? What passkey admits you to the moral elite? The pass- *lack of value*

hatever the ...
upon those ...
to rewards ...
s your ...

... if you fail, ... lure is just or ... your misfor ... *sfortune* that you a right to rewards It is *pain*, regardless of its nature or pain as a primary absolute, that gives you a mortgage on all istence ...

... no moral

is a trade not alms, a payment, not a sacrifice The *deserved* in the selfish, commercial realm of mutual profit, it is o.., *undeserved* that calls for that moral transaction which consis profit to one at the price of disaster to the other To demand re for your virtue is selfish and immoral, it is your *lack of virtue* transforms your demand into a moral right.

"A morality that holds *need* as a claim, holds emptiness—existence—as its standard of value, it rewards an *absence* a d weakness, inability, incompetence, suffering, disease, disaster lack, the fault, the flaw—the *zero*

Who provides the account to pay these claims? Those wh cursed for being non zeros each to the extent of his dis from that ideal Since all values are the product of virtues th gree of your virtue is used as the measure of your penalty degree of your faults is used as the measure of your gain. code declares that the rational man must sacrifice himself t irrational, the independent man to parasites, the honest man t dishonest the man of justice to the unjust, the productive m thieving loafers the man of integrity to compromising knaves man of self-esteem to sniveling neurotics Do you wonder a meanness of soul in those you see around you? The man achieves these virtues will not accept your moral code, the who accepts your moral code will not achieve these virtues

Under a morality of sacrifice, the first value you sacrifi morality, the next is self-esteem When need is the standard, man is both victim and parasite As a victim, he must lab fill the needs of others, leaving himself in the position of a site whose needs must be filled by others He cannot approa fellow men except in one of two disgraceful roles he is b beggar and a sucker

'You fear the man who has a dollar less than you, that d is rightfully his, he makes you feel like a moral defrauder hate the man who has a dollar more than you, that dollar is fully yours, he makes you feel that you are morally defra The man below is a source of your guilt, the man above is a s of your frustration You do not know what to surrender or der when to give and when to grab, what pleasure in life is righ yours and what debt is still unpaid to others—you struggle to e as 'theory,' the knowledge that by the moral standard you've cepted you are guilty every moment of your life, there i mouthful of food you swallow that is not *needed* by someone where on earth—and you give up the problem in blind resent you conclude that moral perfection is not to be achieved o

[illegible]

...the justification of sacrifice, that your m

corrupt than the corruption it purports to justify The motive
r sacrifice, it tells you, should be *love*—the love you ought
for every man. A morality that professes the belief that the
of the spirit are more precious than matter, a morality that
s you to scorn a whore who gives her body indiscriminately
men—this same morality demands that you surrender your
promiscuous love for all comers

there can be no causeless wealth, so there can be no causeless
r any sort of [illegible] response

[illegible]

producing and that paper money is as valuable as gold.
serve that he does not expect you to feel a causeless fear.
his kind get into power, they are expert at contriving means
or, at giving you ample cause to feel the fear by which they
to rule you But when it comes to love, the highest of emo-
you permit them to shriek at you accusingly that you are a
delinquent if you're incapable of feeling causeless love When
feels fear without reason, you call him to the attention of a
atrist, you are not so careful to protect the meaning, the
and the dignity of love

ve is the expression of one's values, the greatest reward you
rn for the moral qualities you have achieved in your character
erson, the emotional price paid by one man for the joy he
es from the virtues of another Your morality demands that
ivorce your love from values and hand it down to any vagrant,
response to his worth, but as response to his *need* not as
d, but as alms, not as a payment for virtues, but as a blank
on vices. Your morality tells you that the purpose of love is
you free of the bonds of morality, that love is superior to
judgment, that true love transcends, forgives and survives
manner of evil in its object, and the greater the love the
r the depravity it permits to the loved. To love a man for his
s is paltry and human, it tells you to love him for his flaws
ine. To love those who are worthy of it is self interest to love
nworthy is sacrifice You owe your love to those who don t
ve it, and the less they deserve it, the more love you owe
—the more loathsome the object, the nobler your love—the
unfastidious your love, the greater your virtue—and if you can
your soul to the state of a dump heap that welcomes anything
jual terms, if you can cease to value moral values you have
ved the state of moral perfection

ich is your morality of sacrifice and such are the twin ideals
ers to refashion the life of your body in the image of a human
yards, and the life of your spirit in the image of a dump
ich was your goal—and you've reached it. Why do you now
complaints about man s impotence and the futility of human
ations? Because you were unable to prosper by seeking destruc-
Because you were unable to find joy by worshipping pain?

Because you were unable to live by holding death as your stand of value?

"The degree of your ability to live was the degree to wh you broke your moral code yet you believe that those who pre it are friends of humanity you damn yourself and dare not quest their motives or their goals Take a look at them now when face your last choice—and if you choose to perish do so with knowledge of how cheaply how small an enemy has claimed y life

"The mystics of both schools who preach the creed of sacrif are germs that attack you through a single sore your fear relying on your mind They tell you that they possess a me of knowledge higher than the mind a mode of consciousn superior to reason—like a special pull with some bureaucrat of universe who gives them secret tips withheld from others T mystics of spirit declare that they possess an extra sense you la this special sixth sense consists of contradicting the whole of knowledge of your five The mystics of muscle do not bother to sert any claim to extrasensory perception they merely declare t your senses are not valid and that their wisdom consists of p ceiving your blindness by some manner of unspecified means Bo kinds demand that you invalidate your own consciousness and su render yourself into their power They offer you as proof of th superior knowledge the fact that they assert the opposite of eve thing you know and as proof of their superior ability to deal w ex tence the f [illegible] sacrifice stan [illegible]

[illegible]

s on which consists of denying dimensions The mystics of musc call it 'the future' which consists of denying the present. To ex is to possess identity What identity are they able to give to th superior realm? They keep telling you what it is *not* but never tell y what it *is* All their identifications consist of negating God is th which no human mind can know they say—and proceed to dema that you consider it knowledge—God is non man, heaven is no earth soul is non body virtue is non profit, A is non A, perce tion is non-sensory knowledge is non reason. Their definitions a not acts of defining but of wiping out.

"It is only the metaphysics of a leech that would cling to the id of a universe where a zero is a standard of identification. A lee would want to seek escape from the necessity to name its ow nature—escape from the necessity to know that the substance c which it builds its private universe is blood

"What is the nature of that superior world to which they sac fice the world that exists? The mystics of spirit curse matter th mystics of muscle curse profit. The first wish men to profit by r nouncing the earth the second wish men to inherit the earth by r nouncing all profit. Their non material non profit worlds where rivers run with milk and coffee where wine spr at their command where pastry drops on them fr

and *that* is the whole of their shabby secret ... the
ir esoteric philosophies, of all their dialectics and super-senses,
their evasive eyes and snarling words, the secret for which they
stroy civilization, language, industries and lives the secret for
which they pierce their own eyes and eardrums grind out their
ses, blank out their minds, the purpose for which they dissolve
absolutes of reason, logic, matter existence reality—is to erect
on that plastic fog a single holy absolute their *Wish*

"The restriction they seek to escape is the law of identity The
freedom they seek is freedom from the fact that an A will remain
A, no matter what their tears or tantrums—that a river will not
bring them milk, no matter what their hunger—that water will not
run uphill no matter what comforts they could gain if it did and
if they want to lift it to the roof of a skyscraper they must do it
by a process of thought and labor in which the nature of an inch of
pipe line counts, but their feelings do not—that their feelings are
impotent to alter the course of a single speck of dust in space or
the nature of any action they have committed

"Those who tell you that man is unable to perceive a reality undistorted by his senses, mean that they are unwilling to perceive a
reality undistorted by their feelings 'Things as they are' are things
perceived by your mind divorce them from reason and they
become 'things as perceived by your wishes'

"There is no honest revolt against reason—and when you accept any part of their creed your motive is to get away with something your reason would not permit you to attempt *The freedom*
you seek is freedom from the fact that if you stole your wealth,
you are a scoundrel no matter how much you give to charity *or how*
many prayers you recite—that if you sleep with sluts you're not a
worthy husband, no matter how anxiously you feel that you love
your wife next morning—that you are an entity not a series of
random pieces scattered through a universe where nothing sticks
and nothing commits you to anything the universe of a child's
nightmare where identities switch and swim where the rotter and
the hero are interchangeable parts arbitrarily assumed at will—that
you are a man—that you are an entity—that you *are*

"No matter how eagerly you claim that the goal of your mystic
wishing is a higher mode of life, the rebellion against identity is
the wish for non-existence The desire not to be anything is the
desire not to be

"Your teachers, the mystics of both schools, have ...

causality in their consciousness, then strive to reverse it in exis
They take their emotions as a cause, and their mind as a p
effect. They make their emotions their tool for perceiving r
They hold their desires as an irreducible primary, as a fact
seding all facts An honest man does not desire until he has
fied the object of his desire. He says 'It is, therefore I wa
They say I want it therefore it is'

"They want to cheat the axiom of existence and consciou
they want their consciousness to be an instrument not of *perce*
but of *creating* existence and existence to be not the *object* bu
subject of their consciousness—they want to be that God
created in their image and likeness, who creates a universe o
a void by means of an arbitrary whim. But reality is not t
cheated. What they achieve is the opposite of their desire
want an omnipotent power over existence, instead they lose
power of their consciousness By refusing to know, they cond
themselves to the horror of a perpetual unknown.

"Those irrational wishes that draw you to their creed,
emotions you worship as an idol on whose altar you sacrifice
earth, that dark, incoherent passion within you, which you
as the voice of God or of your glands is nothing more than
corpse of your mind An emotion that clashes with your rea
an emotion that you cannot explain or control, is only the car
of that stale thinking which you forbade your mind to revise

"Whenever you committed the evil of refusing to think and to
of exempting from the absolute of reality some one small wis
yours, whenever you chose to say Let me withdraw from
judgment of reason the cookies I stole, or the existence of God,
me have my one irrational whim and I will be a man of rea
about all else—*that* was the act of subverting your consciousn
the act of corrupting your mind Your mind then became a f
jury who takes orders from a secret underworld, whose ver
distorts the evidence to fit an absolute it dares not touch—an
censored reality is the result a splintered reality where the
you chose to see are floating among the chasms of those
didn t, held together by that embalming fluid of the mind wh
is an emotion exempted from thought.

"The links you strive to drown are causal connections T
enemy you seek to defeat is the law of causality it permits you
miracles The law of causality is the law of identity applied to
tion. All actions are caused by entities The nature of an act
is caused and determined by the nature of the entities that act
thing cannot act in contradiction to its nature An action not caus
by an entity would be caused by a zero, which would mean a
controlling a *thing* a non-entity controlling an entity, the no
existent ruling the existent—which is the universe of your teach
desire the *cause* of their doctrines of causeless action, the *reason*
their revolt against reason, the goal of their morality, their politic
their economics the ideal they strive for the reign of the zero.

"The law of identity does not permit you to have your cake an
" too The law of causality does not permit you to eat your cak

blanks of
you don't
your cake

[illegible] could give you ability, the cause—you plead for mercy, *mercy*, not justice, as if an unearned forgiveness could wipe out the *cause* of your plea And to indulge your ugly little shams, you support the doctrines of your teachers, while they run hog wild proclaiming that spending, the effect, creates riches, the cause, that machinery, the effect, creates intelligence, the cause, that your sexual desires, the effect, create your philosophical values, the cause

"Who pays for the orgy? Who causes the causeless? Who are the victims, condemned to remain unacknowledged and to perish in silence, lest their agony disturb your pretense that they do not exist? *We* are, we, the men of the mind

"We are the *cause* of all the values that you covet we who perform the process of *thinking*, which is the process of defining identity and discover[illegible] We taught you to know, to speak

were it

or even

clothes

invented, the money that had not been devised, as exchange for goods that did not exist, the admiration that had not been experienced for men who had achieved nothing the love that belongs and pertains only to those who preserve their capacity to think, to choose, *to value*

"You—who leap like a savage out of the jungle of your *feelings* into the Fifth Avenue of *our* New York and proclaim that you want to keep the electric lights, but to destroy the generators—it is *our* wealth that you use while destroying us it is *our* values that you use while damning us, it is *our* language that you use while denying the mind

"Just as your mystics of spirit invented their heaven in the image of our earth, omitting our existence, and promised you rewards created by miracle out of non matter—so your modern mystics of muscle omit our existence and promise you a heaven where matter shapes itself of its own causeless will into all the rewards desired by your non mind

"For centuries, the mystics of spirit had existed by running a protection racket—by making life on earth unbearable, then

ing you for consolation and relief, by forbidding all the virtue that make existence possible, then riding on the shoulders of your guilt, by declaring production and joy to be sins, then collecting blackmail from the sinners We, the men of the mind were the unnamed victims of their creed, we who were willing to break their moral code and to bear damnation for the sin of reason—we who thought and acted, while they wished and prayed—we who were moral outcasts, we who were bootleggers of life when life was held to be a crime—while they basked in moral glory for the virtue of surpassing material greed and of distributing in selfless charity the material goods produced by—blank-out.

Now we are chained and commanded to produce by savages who do not grant us even the identification of sinners—by savages who proclaim that we do not exist, then threaten to deprive us of the life we don't possess, if we fail to provide them with the goods we don't produce Now we are expected to continue running railroads and to know the minute when a train will arrive after crossing the span of a continent, we are expected to continue running steel mills and to know the molecular structure of every drop of metal in the cables of your bridges and in the body of the airplanes that support you in mid air—while the tribes of your grotesque little mystics of muscle fight over the carcass of our world, gibbering in sounds of non language that there are no principles, no absolutes, no knowledge, no mind

Dropping below the level of a savage, who believes that the magic words he utters have the power to alter reality, they believe that reality can be altered by the power of the words they do not utter—and their magic tool is the blank-out, the pretense that nothing can come into existence past the voodoo of their refusal to identify it.

"As they feed on stolen wealth in body, so they feed on stolen concepts in mind, and proclaim that honesty consists of refusing to know that one is stealing As they use effects while denying causes, so they use our concepts while denying the roots and the existence of the concepts they are using As they seek, not to build but to *take over* industrial plants, so they seek, not to think, but to *take over* human thinking

"As they proclaim that the only requirement for running a factory is the ability to turn the cranks of the machines, and blank out the question of who created the factory—so they proclaim that there are no entities, that nothing exists but motion, and blank out the fact that *motion* presupposes the thing which moves, that without the concept of entity, there can be no such concept as 'motion.' As they proclaim their right to consume the unearned, and blank out the question of who's to produce it—so they proclaim that there is no law of identity, that nothing exists but change, and blank out the fact that *change* presupposes the concepts of what changes, from what and to what, that without the law of identity no such concept as 'change' is possible As they rob an industrialist while denying his value, so they seek to seize power over all of existence while denying that existence exists

"We know that we know nothing,' they chatter, blanking out the
ict that they are claiming knowledge—'There are no absolutes,'
hey chatter, blanking out the fact that they are uttering an abso-
ite—'You cannot *prove* that you exist or that you're conscious,'
hey chatter, blanking out the fact that *proof* presupposes existence,
onsciousness and a complex chain of knowledge the existence of
omething to know, of a consciousness able to know it, and of a
nowledge that has learned to distinguish between such concepts
s the proved and the unproved.

"When a savage who has not learned to speak declares that
xistence must be proved, he is asking you to prove it by means of
on-existence—when he declares that your consciousness must be
roved, he is asking you to prove it by means of unconsciousness—
e is asking you to step into a void outside of existence and con-
iousness to give him proof of both—he is asking you to become
zero gaining knowledge about a zero

"When he declares that an axiom is a matter of arbitrary choice
nd he doesn't choose to accept the axiom that he exists, he blanks
ut the fact that he has accepted it by uttering that sentence, that
e only way to reject it is to shut one s mouth, expound no theories
nd die

"An axiom is a statement that identifies the base of knowledge
nd of any further statement pertaining to that knowledge, a state-
ent necessarily contained in all others, whether any particular
eaker chooses to identify it or not An axiom is a proposition that
efeats its opponents by the fact that they have to accept it and
e it in the process of any attempt to deny it Let the caveman who
es not choose to accept the axiom of identity, try to present his
eory without using the concept of identity or any concept derived
om it—let the anthropoid who does not choose to accept the ex
ence of nouns, try to devise a language without nouns adjectives
verbs—let the witch-doctor who does not choose to accept the
lidity of sensory perception, try to prove it without using the
ta be obtained by sensory perception—let the head hunter who
es [illegible] th
s t [illegible] ds
f [illegible] m
de [illegible] at
[illegible] ral
e freedom of man s mind was needed to [illegible]
ilization, but is not needed to *maintain* it, be given an arrowhead
d bearskin, not a university chair of economics

"Do you think they are taking you back *to dark ages*? They are
ing you back to darker ages than any your history has known
eir goal is not the era of pre-science, but the era of pre-language
[illegible] of the concept on which man's mind,
[illegible] cept of an *objective* reality
[illegible] consciousness—and you will
[illegible]
[illegible] pped that A is A
[illegible] at the level of a
[illegible] as its initial sen

tions and has not learned to distinguish solid objects It is to a ba that the world appears as a blur of motion, without things th move—and the birth of his mind is the day when he grasps th the streak that keeps flickering past him is his mother and the wh beyond her is a curtain that the two are solid entities and neith can turn into the other, that they *are* what they are, that they exi
The [illegible]
he g [illegible]
day [illegible]
delu [illegible]
sees in a desert is not a delusion, that the air and the light ra that cause it are real, but it is not a city, it is a city's reflection the day when he grasps that he is not a passive recipient of th sensations of any given moment, that his senses do not provide hi with automatic knowledge in separate snatches independent o context but only with the material of knowledge, which his min must learn to integrate—the day when he grasps that his sense cannot deceive him that physical objects cannot act without cause that his organs of perception are physical and have no volitio no power to inven [illegible]
absolute, but his [illegible]
discover the natu [illegible]
material his mind must identify the things that he perceives— [illegible]
is the day of his birth as a thinker and scientist

'*We* are the men who reach that day, you are the men wh [illegible] does [illegible]

he is a helpless pawn at the mercy of forces beyond his control He believes that nature is ruled by demons who possess an omni potent power and that reality is their fluid plaything where they can turn his bowl of meal into a snake and his wife into a beetle at any moment, where the A he has never discovered can be any non A they choose where the only knowledge he possesses is that he must not attempt to know He can count on nothing he can only *wish* and he spends his life on wishing on begging his demons to grant him his wishes by the arbitrary power of their will givin them credit when they do, taking the blame when they don't, offer ing them sacrifices in token of his gratitude and sacrifices in token of his guilt, crawling on his belly in fear and worship of sun and moon and wind and rain and of any thug who announces himself as *their* spokesman provided his words are unintelligible and his mask sufficiently frightening—he wishes begs and crawls and dies, leaving you as a record of his view of existence, the distorted mon strosities of his idols [illegible] the embodi men

"If you wonder by what means they propose to do it, walk into any college . . .

tice

"For centuries, the mystics of spirit have proclaimed that faith is superior to reason, but have not dared deny the existence of reason. Their heirs and product, the mystics of muscle have completed their job and achieved their dream they proclaim that everything is faith, and call it a revolt against believing. As revolt against unproved assertions, they proclaim that nothing can be proved as revolt . . . proclaim that

no kr

they

slaver

"If

switch of your standard from the *objective* to the *collective* and wait for mankind to tell you what to think, you will find another switch taking place before the eyes you have renounced you will find that your teachers become the rulers of the collective and if you then refuse to obey them protesting that they are not *the whole* of mankind, they will answer 'By what *means do you* know that we are not? *Are*, brother? Where did you get that old fashioned term?'

"If you doubt that such is their purpose, observe with what passionate consistency the mystics of muscle are striving to make you forget that a concept such as '*mind*' has *ever existed* Observe the twists of undefined verbiage, the words *with rubber* mean the terms left floating in midstream by means of which to get around the recognition of the concept of '*thinki*

you, consists of 'reflexes,' . .

ences,' 'urges' and 'drives'—and refuse to identify the means which they acquired that knowledge, to identify the act they performing when they tell it or the act you are performing wh you listen. Words have the power to 'condition' you, they say refuse to identify the reason why words have the power to cha your—blank-c
a process of—
gaged in the a
to solve a pr
blank-out A
A factory is a natural resource,' like a tree, a rock or a puddle.

"The problem of production they tell you, has been solved a deserves no study or concern, the only problem left for your flexes' to solve is now the problem of distribution. Who solved t problem of production? Humanity, they answer What was t solution? The goods are here How did they get here? Someho What caused it? Nothing has causes

"They proclaim that every man born is entitled to exist witho labor and, the laws of reality to the contrary notwithstanding entitled to receive his 'minimum sustenance'—his food, his cloth his shelter—with no effort on his part, as his due and his birthrig To receive it—from whom? Blank-out Every man they announ owns an equal share of the technological benefits created in t world Created—by whom? Blank-out Frantic cowards who po ture as defenders of industrialists now define the purpose of ec nomics as an adjustment between the unlimited *desires* of m and the goods supplied in limited quantity' Supplied—by whor Blank-out. Intellectual hoodlums who pose as professors shr away the thinkers of the past by declaring that their soci theories were based on the impractical assumption that man was rational being—but since men are not rational, they declare, the ought to be established a system that will make it possible for the to exist while being *irrational* which means while defying realit Who will make it possible? Blank-out Any stray mediocrity rush into print with plans to control the production of mankind—an whoever agrees or disagrees with his statistics, no one questions hi right to enforce his plans by means of a gun Enforce—on whom Blank-out. Random females with causeless incomes flutter on trip around the globe and return to deliver the message that the back ward peoples of the world *demand* a higher standard of living De mand—of whom? Blank-out.

"And to forestall any inquiry into the cause of the differenc between a jungle village and New York City, they resort to the ultimate obscenity of explaining man's industrial progress—sky scrapers cable bridges, power motors, railroad trains—by dec that man is an animal who possesses an *instinct of tool making*

"Did you wonder what is wrong with the world? You are now ing the climax of the creed of the uncaused and unearned gangs of mystics, of spirit or muscle, are fighting one
to rule you, snarling that love is the solution

consciousness has always been their only purpose throughout ages—and *power*, the power to rule you by force, has always n their only lust.

From the rites of the jungle witch-doctors which distorted

kept men huddling on the mud floors of their hovels, in or that the devil might steal the soup they had worked eighteen rs to earn—to the seedy little smiling professor who assures you your brain has no capacity to think that you have no means

chose to submit rather than to understand to *be* er than to think Faith in the supernatural begins as faith he superiority of others His surrender took the form of the ng that he must hide his lack of understanding that others ess some mysterious knowledge of which he alone is deprived reality is whatever they want it to be, through some means for denied to him

From then on afraid to think, he is left at the mercy ntified feelings. His feelings become his only guide, his

nant of personal identity, he clings to them with ferocious possess ness—and whatever thinking he does is devoted to the struggl hiding from himself that the nature of his feelings is terror

"When a mystic declares that he *feels* the existence of a po superior to reason he feels it all right, but that power is not omniscient super spirit of the universe it is the consciousness any passer by to whom he has surrendered his own A mystic driven by the urge to impress to cheat to flatter to deceive, *force* that omnipotent consciousness of others *They* are his o key to reality he feels that he cannot exist save by harnessing th mysterious power and extorting their unaccountable consent. Th are his only means of perception and like a blind man w depends on the sight of a dog he feels he must leash them in or to live To control the consciousness of others becomes his o passion power lust is a weed that grows only in the vacant lots an abandoned mind

"Every dictator is a mystic and every mystic is a potential d tator A mystic craves obedience from men not their agreeme He wants them to surrender their consciousness to his assertion his edicts his wishes his whims—as *his* consciousness is surre dered to theirs He wants to deal with men by means of faith a force—he finds no satisfaction in their consent if he must earn by means of facts and reason Reason is the enemy he dreads an simultaneously considers precarious reason to h m is a mea of deception he *feels* that men possess some power more pote than reason—and only their causeless belief or their forced obed ence can give him a sense of security a proof that he has gain control of the mystic endowment he lacked His lust is to command not to convince conviction requires an act of independence an rests on the absolute of an objective reality What he seeks is powe over reality and over men s means of perceiving it their mind the power to interpose his will between existence and consc ness as if by agreeing to fake the reality he orders them to fak men would in fact create it

"Just as the mystic is a parasite in matter, who expropriates th wealth created by others—just as he is a parasite in spirit, wh plunders the ideas created by others—so he falls below the lev of a lunatic who creates his own distortion of real ty to the lev of a parasite of lunacy who seeks a distortion created by others

"There is only one state that fulfills the mystic s longing fo infinity non-causality non identity *death* No matter what une telligible causes he ascribes to his incommunicable feelings, who ever rejects reality rejects existence—and the feelings that move him from then on are hatred for all the values of man s life an lust for all the evils that destroy it A mystic relishes the spectacl of suffering, of poverty subservience and terror these give him a feeling of triumph a proof of the defeat of rational reality Bu no other reality exists

"No matter whose welfare he professes to serve be it the welfa of God or of that d sembodied gargoyle he describes as 'The People, no matter what ideal he proclaims of some su

...tural dimension—*in fact, in reality, on earth*, his ideal is *death*,

...giving
...ribe he
...give it
...-out in
...hat the

...who are innocent enough to believe that the forces let ...se in your world today are moved by greed for material plunder ...the mystics' scramble for spoils is only a screen to conceal from ...eir mind the nature of their motive Wealth is a means of human ...fe, and they clamor for wealth in imitation of living beings, to ...etend to themselves that they desire to live But their swinish ...dulgence in plundered luxury is not enjoyment it is escape They ...o not want to own your fortune, they want you to lose it they ...o not want to succeed, they want you to fail they do not want to ...ve, they want you to die, they desire nothing they hate existence, ...nd they keep running, each trying not to learn that the object of ...s hatred is himself

"You who've never grasped the nature of evil, you who describe ...em as 'misguided idealists'—may the God you invented forgive ...ou!—*they* are the essence of evil, they those anti living objects ...ho seek, by devouring the world to fill the *selfless* zero of their ...ul. It is not your wealth that they're after Theirs is a conspiracy ...ainst the mind, which means against life and man

"It is a conspiracy without leader or direction and the random ...tle thugs ... the agony of one *land* ...an ... dam ...th ... ason, ...l ... every ...in ... 'heart' ...r the mind.

"It is a conspiracy of all those who seek not to live but to *get* ...ay *with living* those who seek to cut just one small corner ...lity and are drawn, by feeling to all the others who are ...ting other corners—a conspiracy that unites by links of

all those who pursue a *zero* as a value· the professor who to think, takes pleasure in crippling the mind of his student businessman who, to protect his stagnation, takes pleasure in ing the ability of competitors the neurotic who, to defe self loathing takes pleasure in breaking men of self-esteem incompetent who takes pleasure in defeating achievement mediocrity who takes pleasure in demolishing greatness, the e who takes pleasure in the castration of all pleasure—and al intellectual munition makers, all those who preach that the lation of virtue will transform vices into virtue *Death* premise at the root of their theories, *death* is the goal of actions in practice—and *you* are the last of their victims.

'We, who were the living buffers between you and the natu your creed, are no lon ... the *effects* of chosen beliefs We are ... debts you incurred in ... generations behind yo ... and I am the man who has called in the loan

"I am the man whose existence your blank outs were intend permit you to ignore I am the man whom you did not want to live or to die You did not want me to live, because you afraid of knowing that I carried the responsibility you dropped that your lives depended upon me, you did not want me to because you knew it.

"Twelve years ago, when I worked in your world, I was inventor I was one of a profession that came last in human his and will be first to vanish on the way back to the sub-human. inventor is a man who asks 'Why?' of the universe and lets not stand between the answer and his mind

"Like the man who discovered the use of steam or the man discovered the use of oil, I discovered a source of energy w was available since the birth of the globe, but which men had known how to use except as an object of worship, of terror of legends about a thundering god I completed the experime model of a motor that would have made a fortune for me and those who had hired me, a motor that would have raised efficiency of every human installation using power and would h added the gift of higher productivity to every hour you spen earning your living

"Then, one night at a factory meeting, I heard myself sente to death by reason of my achievement. I heard three paras assert that my brain and my life were their property, that my ri to exist was conditional and depended on the satisfaction of th desires The purpose of my ability, they said, was to serve the ne of those who were less able. I had no right to live they said, reason of my competence for living, their right to live was unco ditional, by reason of their incompetence

"Then I saw what was wrong with the world, I saw w destroyed men and nations and where the battle for life had be fought. I saw that the enemy was an inverted morality—a that my sanction was its only power I saw that evil was impot

that evil was the irrational, the blind, the anti real—and that the ly weapon of its triumph was the willingness of the good to serve Just as the parasites around me were proclaiming their helpless pendence on my mind and were expecting me voluntarily to cept a slavery they had no power to enforce, just as they were nting on my self immolation to provide them with the means their plan—so throughout the world and throughout men s his

the extortions of loafing countries, it is the good their own destroyers who e and let evil transmit to

li the poison of destruction, thus gaining for evil the power of vival, and for their own values—the impotence of death I saw t there com

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If you want to know what you lost when I quit and when my ters deserted your world—stand on an empty stretch of soil in a lerness unexplored by men and ask yourself what manner of vival you would achieve and how long you would last if you sed to think, with no one around to teach you the motions or, ou chose to think, how much your mind would be able to discover—ask yourself how many independent conclusions you have ched in the course of your life and how much of your time was nt on performing the actions you learned from others—ask urself whether you would be able to discover how to till the soil l grow your food, whether you would be able to invent a wheel, lever an induction coil, a generator, an electronic tube—then ide whether men of ability are exploiters who live by the fruit *your* labor and rob you of the wealth that *you* produce and ether you dare to believe that you possess the power to enslave m. Let your women take a look at a jungle female with her iveled face and pendulous breasts as she sits grinding meal in a vl, hour after hour, century by century—then let them ask them res whether their 'instinct of tool making' will provide them with r electric refrigerators, their washing machines and *vacuum* aners, and, if not, whether they care to destroy those who proed it all, but not 'by instinct.'

Take a look around you, you savages who stutter that ideas are ated by men s means of production, that a *machine* is not the duct of human thought, but a mystical power that produces nan thinking. You have never discovered the industrial age—an cling to the morality of the barbarian eras when a n of human subsistence was produced by the muscular

of slaves Every mystic had always longed for slaves to prot him from the material reality he dreaded But *you*, you grotes little atavists, stare blindly at the skyscrapers and smokesta around you and dream of enslaving the material providers who scientists inventors industrialists When you clamor for pub ownership of the means of production, you are clamoring for publ ownership of the mind I have taught my strikers that the answ you deserve is only 'Try and get it.'

'You proclaim yourself unable to harness the forces of matter yet propose to harness the minds of men who are able achieve the feats you cannot equal You proclaim that you can survive without us yet propose to dictate the terms of our surviv You proclaim that you need us, yet indulge the impertinence asserting your right to rule us by force—and expect that we, w are not afraid of that physical nature which fills you with terr will cower at the sight of any lout who has talked you into vou him a chance to command us.

"You propose to establish a social order based on the follow tenets that you re incompetent to run your own life but compet to run the lives of others—that you re unfit to exist in freedom, b fit to become an omnipotent ruler—that you're unable to earn yo living by the use of your own intelligence but able to judge po ticians and to vote them into jobs of total power over arts y have never seen over sciences you have never studied over achie ments of which you have no knowledge over the gigantic industr where you by your own definition of your capacity, would be unal successfully to fill the job of assistant greaser

"Th ... impoten

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'It

stage of self abasement where you seek to make the *human* mean the weakling, the fool the rotter, the liar, the failu the coward the fraud and to exile from the human race the he the thinker, the producer, the inventor, the strong, the purposef the pure—as if 'to feel were human, but to think were not, as to fail were human but to succeed were not, as if corruption w human, but virtue were not—as if the premise of *death* were prop to man, but the premise of *life* were not.

"In order to deprive us of honor, that you may then deprive of our wealth you have always regarded us as slaves who deser no moral recognition You praise any venture that claims to non profit and damn the men who made the profits that make t venture possible You regard as 'in the public interest' any proj serving those who do not pay, it is not in the public interest provide any services for those who do the paying 'Public bene is anything given as alms to engage in trade is to injure the pub 'Public welfare is the welfare of those who do not earn it th who do are entitled to no welfare *'The public,'* to you, is whoe has failed to achieve any virtue or value, whoever provides the goods you require for surviv

garded as part of the public or as part of the human race

"What blank- . . .

for help in the tone
counting on our pity,
taught you to count
f our virtues in the
guilty of succeeding
ou damn, yet beg us

"Did you want to know who is John Galt? I am the first man of ability who refused to regard it as guilt I am the first man who would not do penance for my virtues or let them be used as the tools of my destruction. I am the first man who would not suffer martyrdom ... who wished me to perish ... the first man who told ... y learned to deal with us as traders, giving value for value, they would have to exist without me, as I would exist without them, then I would let them learn whose is the need and whose the ability—and if human survival is the standard, whose terms would set the way to survive

"I have done by plan and intention what had been done throughout history by silent default. There have always been men of intelligence who went on strike, in protest and despair, but they did not know the meaning of their action The man who retires from public life, to think, but not to share his thoughts—the man who chooses to spend his years in the obscurity of menial employment, keeping to himself the fire of his mind, never giving it form, expression or reality, refusing to bring it into a world he despises—the man who is defeated by revulsion, the man who renounces before he has started, the man who gives up rather than give in, the man who functions at a fraction of his capacity, *disarmed* by his longing for an ideal he has not found—they are on strike, on strike against unreason, on strike against your world and your values. But not knowing any values of their *own* they abandon the quest to know—in the darkness of their hopeless indignation, which is righteous without knowledge of the right, and passionate without knowledge of desire, they concede to you the power of reality and surrender the incentives of their mind—and they perish in bitter futility, as rebels who never learned the object of their rebellion, as lovers who never discovered their *love*

"The infamous times you call the Dark Ages were an era of intelligence on strike, when men of ability went underground and lived undiscovered, studying in secret, and died, destroying the ... a few of the bravest of martyrs re-

nture to produce when the ultimate collector of their p[illegible] and the final authority on truth or error was the whim of so[illegible] gilded degenerate sanctioned as superior to reason by divine ri[illegible] and by grace of a club The road of human history was a string [illegible] blank outs over sterile stretches eroded by faith and force [illegible] only a few brief bursts of sunlight, when the released energy [illegible] the men of the mind performed the wonders you gaped at, admir[illegible] and promptly extinguished again

But there will be no extinction, this time The game of [illegible] mystics is up You will perish in and by your own unreality [illegible] the men of reason will survive

"I have called out on strike the kind of martyrs who had ne[illegible] deserted you before I have given them the weapon they had lack[illegible] the knowledge of their own moral value I have taught them th[illegible] the world is ours whenever we choose to claim it, by virtue a[illegible] grace of the fact that ours is the Morality of Life They the gr[illegible] victims who had produced all the wonders of humanity's br[illegible] summer they the industrialists the conquerors of matter had [illegible] discovered the nature of their right They had known that the[illegible] was the power I taught them that theirs was the glory

[illegible]

which pronounces a businessman immoral by reason of the that he keeps you alive You who claim that you long to rise abo[illegible] the crude concerns of the body above the drudgery of servi[illegible] mere physical needs—who is enslaved by physical needs the Hin[illegible] who labors from sunrise to sunset at the shafts of a hand plow [illegible] a bowl of rice or the American who is driving a tractor? *Who* the conqueror of physical reality the man who sleeps on a bed [illegible] nails or the man who sleeps on an inner spring mattress? *Wh*[illegible] is the monument to the triumph of the human spirit over matt[illegible] the germ-eaten hovels on the shorelines of the Ganges or [illegible] Atlantic skyline of New York?

"Unless you learn the answers to these questions—and learn stand at reverent attention when you face the achievements [illegible] man's mind—you will not stay much longer on this earth wh[illegible] we love and will not permit you to damn You will not sneak with the rest of your lifespan I have foreshortened the usual cou[illegible] of history and have let you discover the nature of the paym[illegible] you had hoped to switch to the shoulders of others It is the l[illegible] of your own living power that will now be drained to provide [illegible] unearned for the worshippers and carriers of Death Do not p[illegible] tend that a malevolent reality defeated you—you were defeated [illegible]

hoose whether you wish to perish for a morality you have never
beyed or practiced Pause on the brink of self destruction and
amine your values and your life You had known how to take an
ventory of your wealth Now take an inventory of your mind

"Since childhood, you have been hiding the guilty secret that you
tion that
yourself,
rs profess
ace. The less you felt, the louder you proclaimed your selfless
re and servitude to others, in dread of ever letting them discover
ur own self, the self that you betrayed, the self that you kept in
ncealment, like a skeleton in the closet of your body And they,
o were at once your dupes and your deceivers, they listened and
iced their loud approval, in dread of ever letting you discover
at they were harboring the same unspoken secret Existence
iong you is a giant pretense, an act you all perform for one
other each feeling that he is the only guilty freak, each placing
ach
the
with
half-
still
and
actical are opposites Since childhood you have bee run
g from the terror of a choice you have never dared fully to
ntify If the *practical,* whatever you must practice to exist
atever works, succeeds, achieves your purpose whatever brings
food and joy, whatever profits you is evil—and if the good,
moral is the *impractical* whatever fails, destroys frustrates,
atever ... pain—then your choice

was to remove mor-
moral laws bear no
on to the job of living, except as an impediment and threat
t man's existence is an amoral jungle where anything goes and
thing works And in that fog of switching definitions which
cends upon a frozen mind you have forgotten that the evils
nned by your creed were the virtues required for living and
have come to believe that actual evils are the *practical* means
existence Forgetting that the impractical good was self sacrifice,
... that the prac
tical
uncharted
y to live
er when
ppy.
cheat you feel terror and shame When you ... pain is ...
is diluted by guilt when you suffer, your pain is ...
the feeling that pain is your natural state You ...
admire you believe they are doomed to fa...
believe they are the masters of
n you h

feel disarmed when you come up against a scoundrel you belie that evil is bound to win, since the moral is the impotent, th *impractical*

"Morality to you is a phantom scarecrow made of duty d boredom of punishment of pain a cross breed between the fir schoolteacher of your past and the tax collector of your present a scarecrow standing in a barren field, waving a stick to chas away your pleasures—and *pleasure* to you, is a liquor-soggy brai a mindless slut the stupor of a moron who stakes his cash on animal s race since pleasure cannot be moral

"If you identify your actual belief you will find a triple damn tion—of yourself of life of virtue—in the grotesque conclusio you have reached you believe that morality is a necessary evil.

'Do you wonder why you live without dignity love without fi and die without resistance? Do you wonder why, wherever yo look you see nothing but unanswerable questions, why your li is torn by impossible conflicts why you spend it straddling irr tional fences to evade artificial choices such as soul or body mu or heart, security or freedom, private profit or public good?

'Do you cry that you find no answers? By what means did yo hope to find them? You reject your tool of perception—your mi —then complain that the universe is a mystery You discard yo key then wail that all doors are locked against you. You start o in pursuit of the irrational, then damn existence for making r sense

"The fence you have been straddling for two hours—while hea ing my words and seeking to escape them—is the coward s formu contained in the sentence 'But we don't have to go to extreme The extreme you have always struggled to avoid is the recognitic that reality is final that A is A and that the truth is true. moral code impossible to practice a code that demands imperfe tion or death has taught you to dissolve all ideas in fog, to perm no firm definitions to regard any concept as approximate and a rule of conduct as elastic to hedge on any principle to comprom on any value to take the middle of any road By extorting yo acceptance of supernatural absolutes it has forced you to rej the absolute of nature By making moral judgments impossible, has made you incapable of rational judgment A code that forbi

who declares that there are no absolutes and believes tha escapes responsibility, is the man responsible for all the blood t is now spilled in the world Reality is an absolute, existence is absolute a speck of dust is an absolute and so is a human li Whether you live or die is an absolute Whether you have a pi of bread or not, is an absolute Whether you eat your bread or s it yet th

oth

"You, who are half rational, half-coward, have been playing a con game ... e conned is yourself ...)roximate, then evil ... lty to an unyielding ... up by scoundrels—... you get the indecent spectacle of a cringing bargaining, traitorous good and a self-righteously uncompromising evil As you surrendered to the mystics of muscle when they told you that ignorance consists of claiming knowledge, so now you surrender to them when they shriek that immorality consists of pronouncing moral judgment. When they yell that it is selfish to be certain that you are right, you hasten to assure them that you're certain of nothing. When they shout that it's immoral to stand on your convictions, you assure them that you have no convictions whatever When the thugs of Europe's People's States snarl that you are guilty of intolerance, because you don't treat your desire to live and their desire to kill you as a difference of opinion—you cringe and hasten ... horror When ... you How d ... patient and pr

"You have reached the blind alley of the treason you committed when you agreed that you had no right to exist Once you believed it was 'only a compromise' you conceded it was evil to live for yourself ... of your children Then you ... your children, but moral to ... onceded that it was selfish to ... live for your country *Now*, ... es be devoured by any scum ... you concede that it is selfish to live for your country and that your moral duty is to live for the globe A man who has no right to life, has no right to values and will not keep them

"At the end of your road of successive betrayals stripped of weapons of certainty, of honor, you commit your final act of treason and sign your petition of intellectual bankruptcy while the muscle mystics of the People's States proclaim that they're ... champions of reason and science, you agree and *hasten* to claim that *faith* is your cardinal principle, that reason is ... side of your destroyers, but yours is the side of faith

struggling remnants of rational honesty in the twisted, bewilder minds of your children, you declare that you can offer no ration argument to support the ideas that created this country that the is no rational justification for freedom for property, for justi for rights that they rest on a mystical insight and can be accept only on faith that in reason and logic the enemy is right, but fai is superior to reason. You declare to your children that it is ration to loot to torture to enslave, to expropriate, to murder, but th they must resist the temptations of logic and stick to the discipli of remaining irrational—that skyscrapers, factories radios a planes were the products of faith and mystic intuition, whi famines concentration camps and firing squads are the products a reasonable manner of existence—that the industrial revolutio was the revolt of the men of faith against that era of reason an logic which is known as the Middle Ages Simultaneously in th same breath to the same child, you declare that the looters wh rule the People's States will surpass this country in material pr duction since they are the representatives of science, but that it evil to be concerned with physical wealth and that one must r nounce material prosperity—you declare that the looters idea are noble but they do not mean them while you do, that you purpose in fighting the looters is only to accomplish their aim which they cannot accomplish, but you can, and that the way t fight them is to beat them to it and give one's wealth away The you wonder why your children join the People's thugs or becom half-crazed delinquents, you wonder why the looters' conquest keep creeping closer to your doors—and you blame it on huma stupidity, declaring that the masses are impervious to reason.

"You blank out the open public spectacle of the looters' fig against the mind, and the fact that their bloodiest horrors a unleashed to punish the crime of thinking You blank out the fa that most mystics of muscle started out as mystics of spirit, th [illegible] the men you cal [illegible] same d [illegible] by swing [illegible] the sou and vice versa—that they keep running from your colleges to th slave pens of Europe to an open collapse into the mystic muck o India seeking any refuge against reality, any form of escape fro the mind

"You blank it out and cling to your hypocrisy of 'faith' in orde to blank out the knowledge that the looters have a stranglehol upon you which consists of your moral code—that the looters ar the final and consistent practitioners of the morality you're half obeying half-evading—that they practice it the only way it can b practiced by turning the earth into a sacrificial furnace—that you morality forbids you to oppose them in the only way they can b opposed by refusing to become a sacrificial animal and proudly asserting your right to exist—that in order to fight them finish and with full rectitude *It is your morality that*

ou've invested it in counterfeit securities—and now your morality
as caught you in a trap where you are forced to protect your
elf-esteem by fighting for the creed of self-destruction The grim
oke is on you: that need of self-esteem, which you're unable to
xplain or to define, belongs to *my* morality, not yours, it's the
bjective token of my code, it is my proof within your own soul.

"By a feeling he has not learned to identify, but has derived
rom his first awareness of existence, from his discovery that he

rate need of self-
of volitional con-
value in order to
to be *right* to be
rong in action means danger to his life, to be wrong in person,
o be *evil* means to be unfit for existence

obtain-
, worthy
lies that
has no
standard
which to gauge it. And he makes his fatal error when he
witches this gauge protecting his life into the service of his own
estruction, when he chooses a standard contradicting existence
nd sets his self-esteem against reality

"Every form of causeless self-doubt, every feeling of inferiority
nd secret unworthiness is, in fact, man's hidden dread of his
nability to deal with existence But the greater his terror, the more
ercely he clings to the murderous doctrines that choke him No
an can survive the moment of pronouncing himself irredeemably
vil should he do it, his next moment is insanity or suicide To
scape it—if he's chosen an irrational standard—he will fake,
vade, blank out, he will cheat himself of reality, *of existence*, of
appiness, of mind, and he will ultimately cheat himself of self-
steem by struggling to preserve its illusion rather than to risk
iscovering its lack. To fear to face an issue is to believe that the
orst is true

"It is not any crime you have ever committed that infects your
oul with permanent guilt, it is none of your failures, errors or
h you attempt to evade them—it is
ncy but

he superficial reasons you
our 'selfishness,' weakness or ignorance, but
hreat to your existence *fear*, because you have
eapon of survival *guilt*, because you know you
olitionally.

The *self* you have betrayed is your mind *self esteem* is rel a on one s power to think The ego you seek, that essential y which you cannot express or define, is not your emotions inarticulate dreams but your *intellect* that judge of your supre tribunal whom you ve impeached in order to drift at the mercy any stray shyster you describe as your 'feeling' Then you d yourself through a self made night in a desperate quest for nameless fire moved by some fading vision of a dawn you h seen and lost

Observe the persistence in mankind s mythologies, of the lege about a paradise that men had once possessed the city of Atlan or the Garden of Eden or some kingdom of perfection alwa behind us The root of that legend exists not in the past of t race but in the past of every man You still retain a sense—n as firm as a memory but diffused like the pain of hopeless long —that somewhere in the starting years of your childhood, befo you had learned to submit to absorb the terror of unreason a to doubt the value of your mind you had known a radiant sta of existence you had known the independence of a rational co sciousness facing an open universe *That* is the paradise which y have lost which you seek—which is yours for the taking

Some of you will never know who is John Galt But those you who have known a single moment of love for existence and pride in being its worthy lover a moment of looking at th s eart and letting your glance be its sanction have known the state being a man and I—I am only the man who knew that that sta is not to be betrayed I am the man who knew what made possible and who chose consistently to practice and to be what yo had practiced and been in that one moment

"That choice is yours to make That choice—the dedication t one s highest potential—is made by accepting the fact that th noblest act you have ever performed is the act of your mind in th process of grasping that two and two make four

"Whoever you are—you who are alone with my words in thi moment with nothing but your honesty to help you understand— the choice is still open to be a human being but the price is t start from scratch to stand naked in the face of real ty and reversing a costly historical error to declare 'I am, therefore I'll think

"Accept the irrevocable fact that your life depends upon your mind Admit that the whole of your struggle your doubts, your fakes your evasions was a desperate quest for escape from the responsibility of a volitional consciousness—a quest for automatic knowledge for instinctive action for intuitive certainty—and while you called it a longing for the state of an angel what you were seeking was the state of an animal Accept, as your moral ideal the task of becoming a man.

"Do not say that you re afraid to trust your mind because you know so little Are you safer in surrendering to mystics and discard the l ttle that you know? Live and act within the lim t of your . and keep expanding it to the limit of your life Redeem

your mind from the hockshops of authority Accept the fact that you are not omniscient, but playing a zombie will not give you omniscience—that your mind is fallible but becoming mindless will not make you infallible—that an error made on your own is safer than ten truths accepted on faith because the first leaves you the means to correct it, but the second destroys your capacity to distinguish truth from error In place of your dream of an omniscient automaton, accept the fact that any knowledge man acquires is acquired by h e o i n . . . d . . .
distinction in the univ

"Discard that unlim .
hat man is imperfec
you claim it? Accept the fact that in the realm of morality nothing less than perfection will do But perfection is not to be gauged by mystic commandments to practice the impossible and your moral stature is not to be gauged by matters not open to your choice Man has a single basic choice to think or not, and *that* is the gauge of his virtue Moral perfection is an *unbreached rationality*—not the degree of your intelligence, but the full and relentless use of your mind, not the extent of your knowledge, but the acceptance of reason as an absolute.

"Learn to distinguish the difference between errors of knowledge and breaches of morality An error of knowledge is not a moral flaw provided you are willing to correct it only a mystic would judge human beings by the standard of an impossible automatic omniscience But a breach of morality is the conscious choice of an action you know to be evil or a willful evasion of knowledge suspension of sight and of thought That which you do not know is not a moral charge against you but that which you refuse to know is an account of infamy growing in your soul Make every allowance for errors of knowledge do not forgive or accept any breach of morality Give the benefit of the doubt to those who seek to know but treat as potential killers those specimens of insolent depravity who make demands upon you announcing that they have and seek no reasons, proclaim ng as a license that they just feel it—or those who reject an irrefutable argument by saying 'It's only logic' which means It s only *reality* The only realm opposed to reality is the realm and *premise* of death

Accept the fact that the achievement of your happiness is the only *moral* purpose of your l fe and *that happiness*—not pain or mindless self indulgence—is the *proof* of your moral integrity since it is the proof and the *result* of your loyalty to the achievement of your values. Happ ness *was* the responsibility you dreaded it required the kind of *rational* discipline you did not value yourself enough to assume—and the anxious staleness of your days is a monument to your *evasion* of the knowledge that there is no moral substitute for happ ness that there is no more despicable coward than the man *who* deserted the battle for his joy to assert his right to existence lacking the courage and . life of a bird or a flower reaching for the sun. Discar
rags of you called a virtue

value yourself, which means to fight for your happiness—and when you learn that *pride* is the sum of all virtues, you will learn to live like a man

"As a basic step of self-esteem, learn to treat as the mark of a cannibal any man's *demand* for your help To demand it is to claim that your life is *his* property—and loathsome as such claim might be, there's something still more loathsome your agreement. Do you ask if it's ever proper to help another man? No—if he claims it as his right or as a moral duty that you owe him Yes—if such is your own desire based on your own selfish pleasure in the value of his person and his struggle Suffering as such is not a value only man's fight against suffering, is If you choose to help a man who suffers, do it only on the ground of his virtues, of his fight to recover, of his rational record, or of the fact that he suffers unjustly, then your action is still a trade, and his virtue is the payment for your help But to help ... to help him on the ground of h... his *need*, as a claim—is ... values A man who has ... on the premise of death, ... support his career of destruction. Be it only a penny you will not miss or a kindly smile he has not earned, a tribute to a zero is treason to life and to all those who struggle to maintain it. It is of such pennies and smiles that the desolation of your world was made

"Do not say that my morality is too hard for you to practice and that you fear it as you fear the unknown Whatever living moments you have known were lived by the values of *my* code But you stifled, negated betrayed it You kept sacrificing your virtues to your vices, and the best among men to the worst. Look around you what you have done to society, you had done it first within your soul, one is the image of the other This dismal wreckage, which is now your world, is the physical form of the treason you committed to your values to your friends, to your defenders, to your future, to your country, to yourself

"We—whom you are now calling, but who will not answer any longer—we had lived among you, but you failed to know us you refused to think and to see what we were You failed to recognize the motor I invented—and it became, in *your* world, a pile of dead scrap You failed to recognize the hero in your soul—and you failed to know me when I passed you in the street. When you cried in despair for the unattainable spirit which you felt had deserted your world, you gave it my name, but what you were calling was your own betrayed self-esteem. You will not recover one without the other

"When you failed to give recognition to man's mind and attempted to rule human beings by force—those who submitted had no mind to surrender, those who had, were men who don't submit. Thus the man of productive genius assumed in *your* world the disguise of a playboy and became a destroyer of wealth, choosing to annihilate his fortune rather than surrender it to guns. Thus the thinker

man of reason assumed in *your* world the role of a pirate, to end his values by force against your force rather than submit the rule of brutality Do you hear me, Francisco d Anconia and nar Danneskjöld my first friends, my fellow fighters, my ow outcasts in whose name and honor I speak?

"It was the three of us who started what I am now completing. was the three of us who resolved to avenge this country and to ease its imprisoned soul This greatest of countries was built on

n.

This country—the product of *reason*—could not survive on the rality of sacrifice It was not built by men who sought self nolation or by men who sought handouts It could not stand on mystic split that divorced man s soul from his body It could live by the mystic doctrine that damned this earth as evil and se who succeeded on earth as depraved From its start this ntry was a threat to the ancient rule of mystics In the brilliant ket-explos on of its youth this country displayed to an incredu

what happ ness was America or mystics. i infect you with the gant in body with a

ging midget in place of its soul w its living soul was ren underground to labor and feed you in silence unnamed onored negated its soul and hero the industrialist Do you r me now, Hank Rearden the greatest of the v ctims I have nged?

Neither he nor the rest of us will return until the road is clear rebuild this country—until the wreckage of the morality of ifice has been wiped out of our way A country s political em is based on its code of morality We will rebuild America's em on the moral premise which had been its foundation but ch you treated as a guilty underground in your frantic *evasion* the conflict between that premise and your mystic morality premise that man is an end in himself not *the means to the* s of others that man s life his freedom his happiness are *his* inalienable right

You who ve lost the concept of a right you who swing in otent evasiveness between the claim that *rights are a gift of* a supernatural gift to be taken on faith or the claim that ts are a gift of society to be broken *at its arbitrary* whim— source of man s rights is not divine law or congressional source of man s rights is not divine law or congressional the law of identity A is A—and *Man is Man Rights* are conditions of existence required by man s nature for his proper

to negate man s rights is *wrong* which means is evil which m
is anti life

Rights are a moral concept—and morality is a matter of ch
Men are free not to choose man s survival as the standard of
morals and their laws but not free to escape from the fact tha
alternative is a cannibal society which exists for a while
devouring its best and collapses l ke a cancerous body when
healthy have been eaten by the diseased, when the rational
been consumed by the irrational Such has been the fate of
societies in history but you ve evaded the knowledge of the c
I am here to state it the agent of retribution was the la
identity which you cannot escape. Just as man cannot liv
means of the irrational so two men cannot or two thousand
two billion Just as man can t succeed by defying reality so a n
can t, or a country or a globe A is A The rest is a matte
time provided by the generosity of victims

Just as man can t exist without his body so no rights can
without the right to translate one s rights into reality—to thi
work and to keep the results—which means the right of pro
The modern mystics of muscle who offer you the fraud
alternative of human rights versus property rights as if
could exist without the other are making a last, grotesque att
to revive the doctrine of soul versus body Only a ghost can
without material property only a slave can work with no
to the product of his effort The doctrine that human rights
superior to 'property rights simply means that some human be
have the right to make property out of others since the comp
have nothing to gain from the incompetent it means the righ
the incompetent to own their betters and to use them as produ
cattle Whoever regards this as human and right has no righ
the title of human

"The source of property rights is the law of causality All p
erty and all forms of wealth are produced by man s mind
labor As you cannot have effects without causes so you ca
have wealth without its source without intell gence You ca
force intelligence to work those who re able to think, wil
work under compulsion those who will, won t produce much n
than the price of the whip needed to keep them enslaved You
not obtain the products of a mind except on the owner s terms
trade and by volitional consent. Any other policy of men tow
man s property is the pol cy of criminals no matter what
numbers. Criminals are savages who play it short range and st
when their prey runs out—just as you re starving today you
believed that crime could be pract cal if your government dec
robbery was legal and resistance to robbery illegal

The only proper purpose of a government is to protect man's hts, which means to protect him from physical violence A per government is only a policeman, acting as an agent of h's self-defense, and, as such, may resort to force *only* against se who *start* the use of force The only proper functions of a ernment are the police, to protect you from criminals, the ny, to protect you from foreign invaders; and the courts, to tect your property and contracts from breach or fraud by others, settle disputes by rational rules, according to *objective* law. But government that *initiates* the employment of force against men o had forced no one, the employment of armed compulsion inst disarmed victims, is a nightmare infernal machine designed annihilate morality: such a government reverses its only moral

to the role of
n to the role of
violence against
h a government
ial conduct: you
your gang

ist on such

agree to give his fellow men a blank check on his life l his mind, to accept the belief that others have the right to pose of his person at their whim, that the will of the majority omnipotent that the ... of muscles and numbers is a
h We, the men of the mind,
slaves, do not deal in blank
ve or work with any form of

long as men, in the era of savagery had no concept of ective reality and believed that physical nature was ruled by the im of unknowable demons—no thought, no science, no produc- n were possible Only when men discovered that nature was a n, predictable absolute were they able to rely on their knowledge, choose their course, to plan their future and slowly, to rise m the cave *Now* you have placed modern industry, with its ... power of
ary
vest
ices
rms
a harvest. But you expect industrial giants ... and undertake *ninety-* decades, invest in terms of generations and undertake *ninety-* e-year contracts—to continue to function and produce, not owing what random caprice in the skull of what random official l descend upon them at what moment to demolish the whole their effort. Drifters and physical laborers live and plan by the ge of a day The better the mind the longer the range. *A man* ...ight continue to build on your
l run A man who env
give ten years of u
new product, when he
lution to the

that gangs of entrenched mediocrity are juggling the laws ag him to tie him restrict him and force him to fail but shoul fight them and struggle and succeed, they will seize his rew and his invention

"Look past the range of the moment, you who cry that you to compete with men of superior intelligence that their min a threat to your livelihood that the strong leave no chance to weak in a market of voluntary trade What determines the mat value of your work? Nothing but the productive effort of mind—if you lived on a desert island The less efficient the ing of your brain the less your physical labor would bring yo and you could spend your life on a single routine collectin precarious harvest or hunting with bow and arrows, unable think any further But when you live in a rational society w men are free to trade you receive an incalculable bonus material value of your work is determined not only by your ef but by the effort of the best productive minds who exist in world around you

"When you work in a modern factory you are paid, not only your labor but for all the productive genius which has made factory possible for the work of the industrialist who built it, the work of the investor who saved the money to risk on untried and the new for the work of the engineer who designed machines of which you are pushing the levers for the work of inventor who created the product which you spend your time making, for the work of the scientist who discovered the laws went into the making of that product, for the work of the phil opher who taught men how to think and whom you spend y time denouncing

"The machine the frozen form of a living intelligence, is power that expands the potential of your life by raising the p ductivity of your time If you worked as a blacksmith in mystics Middle Ages the whole of your earning capacity wo consist of an iron bar produced by your hands in days and days effort. How many tons of rail do you produce per day if you w for Hank Rearden? Would you dare to claim that the size of yo pay check was created solely by your physical labor and that th rails were the product of your muscles? The standard of living that blacksmith is all that your muscles are worth; the rest is gift from Hank Rearden

"Every man is free to rise as far as he s able or willing, but only the degree to which he thinks that determines the degree which he'll rise Physical labor as such can extend no further th the range of the moment The man who does no more than physi labor consumes the material value-equivalent of his own contrib tion to the process of production, and leaves no further val neither for himself nor others But the man who produces an id in any field of rational endeavor—the man who discovers ne knowledge—is the permanent benefactor of humanity Mater products can't be shared they belong to some ultimate consum it is only the value of an idea that can be shared with unlimit

umbers of men, making all *sharers richer* at no one's sacrifice r loss, raising the productive capacity of whatever labor they erform. It is the value of his own time that the *strong of the* ntellect transfers to the weak, *letting* them work on the jobs he iscovered, while devoting *his time* to further discoveries This is mutual trade to mutual advantage, the interests of the mind are ne, no matter what the *degree* of intelligence, among men who

e unearned

spent, the man who cre-

percentage of his value

what fortune he makes,

ie man who works as a

ntion, receives an enor-

ious payment in proportion to the mental effort that his job

ur judgment for the purpose of a voluntary trade

ur mind's ability to see it—

honesty, and to deal with

price we asked, which you

d to call it unfair that we,

vels and provided you with

... but *we* h...

to deal with your mind, but ...

r answer to *that*, was, 'May you be damned!' Our answer came e. You are.

"You did not care to compete in terms of intelligence—you are w competing in terms of brutality. You did not care to allow wards to be won by successful production—you are now running ace in which rewards are won by successful plunder You called ... trade value for value—you

one another and ...

as a club ... vals, till another gang wrests ...

clutch and clubs them with it in their turn, all of them clam protestations of service to an unnamed public's unspecified You had said that you saw no difference between economic political power, between the power of money and the powe guns—no difference between reward and punishment, no differ between purchase and plunder, no difference between pleasure fear, no difference between life and death You are learning difference now

'Some of you might plead the excuse of your ignorance,

those mystics of science who profess a devotion to some sort 'pure knowledge'—the purity consisting of their claim that knowledge has no practical purpose on this earth—who rese their logic for inanimate matter, but believe that the subject dealing with men requires and deserves no rationality, who sc money and sell their souls in exchange for a laboratory suppl by loot. And since there is no such thing as 'non practical kno edge' or any sort of 'disinterested' action, since they scorn use of their science for the purpose and profit of life, they del their science to the service of death to the only practical purp it can ever have for looters to inventing weapons of coercion destruction. They, the intellects who seek escape from moral valu *they* are the damned on this earth *theirs* is the guilt beyond fo giveness Do you hear me, Dr Robert Stadler?

"But it is not to him that I wish to speak I am speaking to the among you who have retained some sovereign shred of their so unsold and unstamped '—to the order of others' If, in the cha of the motives that have made you listen to the radio tonig there was an honest, *rational* desire to learn what is wrong wi the world, you are the man whom I wished to address By the rul and terms of my code, one owes a rational statement to tho whom it does concern and who're making an effort to know Tho who're making an effort to fail to understand me, are not a conce of mine

"I am speaking to those who desire to live and to recapture th honor of their soul Now that you know the truth about yo world, *stop supporting your own destroyers* The evil of the worl is made possible by nothing but the sanction you give it Withdra your sanction Withdraw your support Do not try to live on you enemies' terms or to win at a game where they're setting the rule Do not seek the favor of those who enslaved you do not beg fo alms from those who have robbed you, be it subsidies loans o jobs, do not join their team to recoup what they've taken b helping them rob your neighbors One cannot hope to maintai one's life by accepting bribes to condone one's destruction Do no struggle for profit, success or security at the price of a lien on you right to exist Such a lien is not to be paid off, the more you pa them the more they will demand, the greater the values you seel

r achieve, the more vulnerably helpless you become There is a ystem of *white blackmail* devised to bleed you, not by means of our sins, but by means of your love for existence

"Do not attempt to rise on the looters' terms or to climb a ladder hile they're holding the ropes Do not allow their hands to touch he only power that keeps them in power your living ambition. io on strike—in the manner I did Use your mind and skill in *rivate*, extend your knowledge, develop your ability, but do not hare your achievements with others Do not try to produce a ortune, with a looter riding on your back Stay on the lowest rung f *their ladder*, earn no more than your barest survival do not nake an extra penny to support the looters' state Since you're aptive, act as a captive, do not help them pretend that you're free e the silent, incorruptible enemy they dread When they force ou, obey—but *do not volunteer* Never volunteer a step in their rection, or a wish, or a plea, or a purpose Do not help a holdup an to claim that he acts as your friend and benefactor Do not elp your jailers to pretend that their jail is your natural state of xistence Do not help them to fake reality That fake is the only am holding off their secret terror, the terror of knowing they're nfit to exist, remove it and let them drown, your sanction is their ly life belt.

"If you find [illegible] of their [illegible] om [illegible] with [illegible] for human existence You have no chance to win on the Morality of eath or by the code of faith and force raise a standard to which e honest *will* repair the standard of Life and Reason

"Act as a rational being and aim at becoming a rallying point all those who are starved for a voice of integrity—act on your ional values, whether alone in the midst of your enemies or th a few of your chosen friends, or as the founder of a modest mmunity on the frontier of mankind's rebirth.

"When the looters' state collapses, deprived of the best of its ves, when it falls to a level of impotent chaos like the mystic-den nations of the Orient, and dissolves into starving robber ngs fighting to rob one another—when the advocates of the orality of sacrifice perish with their final ideal—then and on that y we will return.

"We will open the gates of our city to those who deserve to enter, city of smokestacks, pipe lines, orchards, markets and inviolate nes. We will act as the rallying center for such hidden outposts you'll build With the sign of the dollar as our symbol—the n of free trade and free minds—we will move to reclaim this untry once more from the impotent savages who never dis-vered its nature, its meaning, its splendor Those who choose to n us, will join us, those who don't, will not have the power to p us, hordes of savages have never been an obstacle to men rried the banner of the mind.

Then this country will once more become a sanctuary

vanishing species the rational being The political system we build is contained in a single moral premise no man may ob any values from others by resorting to physical force Every will stand or fall live or die by his rational judgment. If he to use it and falls he will be his only victim If he fears that judgment is inadequate he will not be given a gun to improv If he chooses to correct his errors in time he will have the un structed example of his betters for guidance in learning to th but an end will be put to the infamy of paying with one life the errors of another

"In that world you'll be able to rise in the morning with spirit you had known in your childhood that spirit of eagern adventure and certainty which comes from dealing with a ratio universe No child is afraid of nature it is your fear of men t will vanish the fear that has stunted your soul the fear y acquired in your early encounters with the incomprehensible unpredictable the contradictory the arbitrary the hidden faked *the irrational* in men You will live in a world of responsi beings who will be as consistent and reliable as facts the guar tee of their character will be a system of existence where object reality is the standard and the judge Your virtues will be giv protection your vices and weaknesses will not Every chance w be open to your good none will be provided for your evil Wh you ll receive from men will not be alms or pity or mercy forgiveness of sins but a single value *justice* And when you look at men or at yourself you will feel not disgust, suspicion a guilt but a single constant *respect*

"Such is the future you are capable of winning It requ res struggle so does any human value All life is a purposeful strugg and your only choice is the choice of a goal Do you wish to co tinue the battle of your present or do you wish to fight for m world? Do you wish to continue a struggle that consists of cl ngu to precarious ledges in a sliding descent to the abyss a strugg where the hardships you endure are irreversible and the victori you win bring you closer to destruction? Or do you wish to under take a struggle that consists of rising from ledge to ledge in steady ascent to the top a struggle where the hardships are invest ments in your future and the victories bring you irreversibly close to the world of your moral ideal and should you die withou reaching full sunlight you will die on a level touched by its ray Such is the choice before you. Let your mind and your love of existence decide

"The last of my words will be addressed to those heroes who might still be hidden in the world those who are held prisone not by their evasions but by their virtues and their despera courage My brothers in spirit, check on your virtues and on the nature of the enemies you re serving. Your destroyers hold you by means of your endurance, your generosity your innocence your love—the endurance that carries their burdens—the responds to their cries of despair—the innocence that is u ve of their evil and gives them the benefit of ever

hang to condemn them without understanding and incapable of derstanding such motives as theirs—the love, your love of life, ich makes you believe that they are men and that they love it, But the world of today is the world they wanted, life is the ect of their hatred Leave them to the death they worship In name of your magnificent devotion to this earth leave them n't exhaust the greatness of your soul on achieving the triumph the evil of theirs Do you hear me my love?

"In the name of the best within you do not sacrifice this world

not lose your knowledge that man's p op t

ture an intransigent mind and a step that travels unlimited ads. Do not let your fire go out, spark by irreplaceable spark in hopeless swamps of the approximate, the not-quite, the not yet not at all. Do not let the hero in your soul perish in lonely stration for the life you deserved but have never been able to ch Check your road and the nature of your battle The world n desire is yours

"But t break th the n is a tificial animal who exists for the pleasure of othe ght for value of your person Fight for the virtue of your pride Fight the essence of that which is man for his sovereign rational nd. Fight with the radiant certainty and the absolute rectitude of owing that yours is the Morality of Life and that yours is the ttle for any achievement, any value any grandeur any goodness, y joy that has ever existed on this earth

"You will win when you are ready to pronounce the oath I have ken at the start of my battle—and for those who wish to *know* day of my return I shall now repeat it to the hearing of the orld

"I swear—by my life and my love of it—that I will never live r the sake of another man nor ask another man to live for *mine*"

hapter VIII THE EGOIST

t wasn't real, was it?" said Mr Thompson

They stood in front of the radio as the last sound of Galt's voice d left them No one had moved through *the span* of silence they d stood looking at the radio as if waiting But the radio was now ly a wooden box with some knobs and a *circle* of cloth stretched er an empty loud-speaker

"We seem to have heard it" said Tinky Holloway

"We couldn't help it," said Chick *Morrison*

Mr Thompson was sitting on a crate The pale oblong smear the level of his elbow was the face of Wesley Mouch who was ated on the floor Far behind them like an island in the studio space the drawing room prepared mi-darkness of

their broadcast stood deserted and fully lighted, a semicir-

"Let me out of here!" screamed a young third rate assist suddenly and to no one in particular.

Stay put!" snapped Mr Thompson.

The sound of his own order and the hiccough moan of the fi immobilized somewhere in the darkness, seemed to help him re ture a familiar version of reality His head emerged an inch b from his shoulders

"Who permitted it to hap—" he began in a rising voice stopped, the

cornered "W

no answer "

'We don't

ing his face toward Mr Thompson, in a manner that was alm a threat "Do we?' Taggart s face was distorted, his features seem shapeless a mustache of small beads sparkled between his nose mouth.

"Pipe down" said Mr Thompson uncertainly, drawing a away from him

"We dont have to believe it!" Taggart's voice had the insistent sound of an effort to maintain a trance 'Nobody's said it before! It s just one man! We don't have to believe it"

"Take it easy," said Mr Thompson

"Why is he so sure he's right? Who is he to go against the w world, against everything ever said for centuries and centur Who is he to know? Nobody can be sure! Nobody can know wh right! There isn't any right!"

"Shut up! yelled Mr Thompson "What are you trying to—

The blast that stopped him was a military march leaping denly forth from the radio receiver—the military march interrup three hours ago, played by the familiar screeches of a studio reco It took them a few stunned seconds to grasp it, while the cheer thumping chords went goose stepping through the silence sound grotesquely irrelevant, like the mirth of a half wit. The sta program director was blindly obeying the absolute that no m time was ever to be left blank.

"Tell them to cut it off!" screamed Wesley Mouch, leaping to feet. "It will make the public think that we authorized that spee

you rather th

Thompson

Tell

th

ial announcements, no explanations! Tell them to go on as if
ing had happened!"

alf a dozen of Chick Morrison's morale conditioners went
... ! Send
... Don't
... Don't let them think that it's
ortant!

No!" screamed Eugene Lawson, "No, no, no! We can't give
le the impression that we're endorsing that speech! It's horrible,
ible horrible!" Lawson was not in tears, but his voice had the
gnified sound of an adult sobbing with helpless rage

Who's said anything about endorsing it?" snapped Mr. Thomp-

t's horrible! It's immoral! It's selfish, heartless, ruthless! It's the
vicious speech ever made! It . . . it will make people demand
happy!"

t's only a speech," said Mr. Thompson, not too firmly

t seems to me," said Chick Morrison, his voice tentatively
ful, "that people of nobler spiritual nature, you know what I
, people of . . . of . . . well, of mystical insight"—he paused,
waiting to be slapped, but no one moved, so he repeated
y—"yes, of mystical insight, won t go for that speech Logic
everything, after all."

he workingmen won't go for it," said Tinky Holloway, a bit
helpfully "He didn't sound like a friend of labor "

he women of the country won't go for it," declared Ma
mers. "It is, I believe, an established fact that women don't
or that stuff about the mind Women have finer feelings You
count on the women "

ou can count on the scientists " said Dr Simon Prichett. They
all pressing forward, suddenly eager to speak, as if they had
... Scientists know
... the scientists."
... ich recapturing a
... ept maybe of big

o!" cried Mr. Mowen in terror "No! Don't accuse us! Don't
! I won't have you say it!"

hat?"

hat . . . that . . that anybody is a friend of business!"

on't let's make a fuss about *that* speech," said Dr Floyd
. "It was too intellectual Much too intellectual for the
non man It will have no effect. People are too dumb to under-
it."

eah," said Mouch hopefully, "that's so "

the first place," said Dr Ferris, encouraged, "people can't
In the second place," said Fred Kinnan, "they don't want to."
the third place," they don't want to
And what do you propose to do about that?"
was as if he had ... the question which all of

preceding utterances had been intended to stave off No answered him, but heads drew faintly deeper into shoulders figures drew faintly closer to one another, like a small cluster the weight of the studio's empty space The military march bo through the silence with the inflexible gaiety of a grinning sk

"Turn it off!" yelled Mr. Thompson, waving at the radio. " that damn thing off!"

Some[illegible] rse [illegible] reluct

to [illegible]

Mr Thompson slammed his fist down on his knee "Say s thing—" he ordered, but seeing Kinnan turn away, added, "s body!" There were no volunteers "What are we to do?" he y knowing that the man who answered would, thereafter, be the in power 'What are we to do? Can't somebody tell us what to

"I can!"

It was a woman's voice, but it had the quality of the voice had heard on the radio They whirled to Dagny before she had to step forward from the darkness beyond the group As she st forward her face frightened them—because it was devoid of f

"I can" she said, addressing Mr Thompson. "You're to give

"Give up?" he repeated blankly

'You're through Don't you see that you're through? What do you need after what you've heard? Give up and get out of way Leave men free to exist" He was looking at her, ne objecting nor moving "You're still alive, you're using a hu language, you're asking for answers, you're counting on reas you're still counting on reason, God damn you! You're abl understand It isn't possible that you haven't understood Th nothing you can now pretend to hope, to want or gain or gra reach. There's nothing but destruction ahead, the world's and y own Give up and get out"

They were listening intently, but as if they did not hear words, as if they were clinging blindly to a quality she was t among them to possess· the quality of being alive There wa sound of exultant laughter under the angry violence of her w her face was lifted, her eyes seemed to be greeting some spec at an incalculable distance, so that the glowing patch on her f head did not look like the reflection of a studio spotlight, but sunrise

"You wish to live, don't you? Get out of the way, if you wa chance Let those who can, take over *He* knows what to do don't *He* is able to create the means of human survival You are

"Don't listen to her!"

It was so savage a cry of hatred that they drew away Robert Stadler, as if he had given voice to the them His face looked as they feared theirs wo privacy of darkness

"Don't listen to her!" he cried, his eyes avoidin on him for a brief, level glance that beg

tonishment and ended as an obituary "It's your life or his!"

"Keep quiet, Professor" said Mr Thompson brushing him off th the jerk of one hand Mr Thompson s eyes were watching gny as if some thought were struggling to take shape inside his ull.

"You know the truth, all of you" she said "and so do I and so es every man who s heard John Galt! What else are you waiting ? For proof? He's given it to you For facts? They re all around u. How many corpses do you intend to pile up before you nounce it—your guns, your power your controls and the whole your miserable altruistic creed? Give it up if you want to live ve it up if there s anything left in your mind that s still able to nt human beings to remain alive on this earth!"

"But it s treason!" cried Eugene Lawson "She s talking pure ason!"

"Now now," said Mr Thompson. "You don't have to go to tremes."

"Huh?" asked Tinky Holloway

"But

sked Chick Morrison.

" asked Wesley Mouch

said Mr Thompson his

ature Just don't you be

any of you. There s no harm in listening to any argu nt, is there?"

"That kind of argument?" asked Wesley Mouch his finger stab g again and again in Dagny s direction

"Any kind" said Mr Thompson placidly "We mustn t be in erant."

"But it s treason, ruin disloyalty selfishness and big business opaganda"

"Oh, I don t know," said Mr Thompson We ve got to keep an en mind We ve got to give consideration to every one s view nt. She might have something there *He knows what to do* ve got to be flexible"

"Do you mean that you re willing to quit?" gasped Mouch

"Now don t jump to conclusions" snapped Mr Thompson rily "If there s one thing I can t stand it s people who jump to clusions And another thing is ivory tower intellectuals who k to some pet theory and haven t any sense of practical reality a time like this we ve got to be flexible above all"

He saw a look of bewilderment on all the faces around him on gny s and on the others though not for the same reasons He ied rose to his feet and turned to Dagny

"Thank you Miss Taggart" he said "Thank you for speaking r mind That s what I want you to know—that you can trust and speak to me with full frankness We re not your enemies, s Taggart. Don t pay any attention to the boys—*they're* upset, they'll come down to earth We re not your enemies nor the ntry s Sure we've made mistakes, we re only human but we ng to do our best for the people—that is I mean for everybo n these difficut can t make snap judgments and

momentous decisions on the spur of the moment, can we? \
got to consider it, and mull it over, and weigh it carefully
want you to remember that we're not *anybody's* enemies-
realize that, don't you?"

"I've said everything I had to say," she answered, turning
from him, with no clue to the meaning of his words and no
to attempt to find it.

She turned to Eddie Willers, who had watched the men ar
them with a look of so great an indignation that he seemed
lyzed—as if his brain were crying, "It's evil!" and could not
to any further thought She jerked her head, indicating the
he followed her obediently.

Dr Robert Stadler waited until the door had closed after
then whirled on Mr. Thompson. "You bloody fool! Do you
what you're playing with? Don't you understand that it's Li
death? That it's you or him?"

The thin tremor that ran along Mr Thompson's lips was a
of contempt. "It's a funny way for a professor to behave I d
think professors ever went to pieces"

"Don't you understand? Don't you see that it's one or the oth

"And what is it that you want me to do?"

"You must kill him"

It was the fact that Dr. Stadler had not cried it, but had sa
in a flat, cold, suddenly and fully conscious voice, that broug
chill moment of silence as the whole room's answer.

'You must find him," said Dr. Stadler, his voice cracking
rising once more "You must leave no stone unturned till you
him and destroy him! If he lives, he'll destroy all of us! If he
we can't!"

'How am I to find him?" asked Mr Thompson, speaking slo
and carefully.

"I . I can tell you I can give you a lead. Watch that Tag
woman. Set your men to watch every move she makes. She'll
you to him, sooner or later"

"How do you know that?"

"Isn't it obvious? Isn't it sheer chance that she hasn't deser
you long ago? Don't you have the wits to see that she's one of
kind?" He did not state what kind.

"Yeah," said Mr. Thompson thoughtfully, "yeah, that's true."
jerked his head up with a smile of satisfaction "The professor'
something there Put a tail on Miss Taggart," he ordered, snapp
his fingers at Mouch. "Have her tailed day and night. We've
to find him."

"Yes, sir," said Mouch blankly.

"And when you find him," Dr Stadler asked tensely, "you'll
him?"

"Kill him, you damn fool? We *need* him!" cried Mr Thomps

Mouch waited, but no one ventured the question that was
everyone's mind, so he made the effort to utter
understand you, Mr. Thompson"

"Oh, you theoretical intellectuals!" said Mr. Th

eration "What are you all gaping at? It's simple Whoever he is a man of action Besides he s got a pressure group he s nered all the men of brains He knows what to do We'll find and he'll tell us He ll tell us what to do He'll make things k. He'll pull us out of the hole "

Us Mr Thompson?"

Sure Never mind your theories We ll make a deal with him "

With *h m?*"

Sure Oh, we'll have to compromise, we'll have to make a few cessions to big business, and the welfare boys won t like it, but t the hell—do you know any other way out?"

But his ideas—"

Who cares about ideas?"

Mr Thompson " said Mouch choking, "I I'm afraid he's an who s not open to a deal "

There s no such thing," said Mr Thompson.

* *

, cold wind rattled the broken signs over the windows of ndoned shops, in the street outside the radio station The city med abnormally quiet The distant rumble of the traffic sounded er than usual and made the wind sound louder Empty sidewalks tched off into the darkness, a few lone figures stood in whisper-clusters under the rare lights

dd e Willers did not speak until they were many blocks away n the station He stopped abruptly when they reached a deserted are where the public loud speakers which no one had thought turning off were now broadcasting a domestic comedy—the ll voices of a husband and wife quarreling over Junior s dates an empty stretch of pavement enclosed by unlighted house ts Beyond the square, a few dots of light scattered vertically re the twenty fifth floor limit of the city suggested a distant, g form, which was the Taggart Building

ddie stopped and pointed at the building his finger shaking gny!" he cried then lowered his voice involuntarily "Dagny," whispered, "I know him. He he works there there " He kept pointing at the building with incredulous helpless . "He works for Taggart Transcontinental "

know," she answered her voice was a lifeless monotone "

As a track laborer , as the lowest of track laborers

know "

've talked to him . I've been talking to him for years . he Terminal cafeteria He used to ask questions all of questions about the railroad and I—God Dagny! was I ecting the railroad or was I helping to destroy it?"

Both. Neither It doesn t matter now "

could have staked my life that he loved the railroad!"

He does."

But he s destroyed it."

Yes"

he tightened the collar of her coat and walked on of wind.

"I used to talk to him," he said, after a while "His face Dagny, it didn't look like any of the others, it . it showed he understood so much . I was glad, whenever I saw there, in the cafeteria . I just talked . . . I don't think I h that he was asking questions . . but he was . . . so many q tions about the railroad and and about you"

"Did he ever ask you what I look like, when I'm asleep?"

'Yes Yes, he did I'd found you once asleep in office, and when I mentioned it, he—" He stopped, as a sud connection crashed into place in his mind.

She turned to him, in the ray of a street lamp, raising holding her face in full light for a silent, deliberate moment, in answer and confirmation of his thought.

He closed his eyes "Oh God, Dagny!" he whispered.

They walked on in silence

"He's gone by now, isn't he?" he asked "From the Tagg Terminal, I mean."

"Eddie," she said, her voice suddenly grim, "if you value his don't ever ask that question You don't want them to find him, you? Don't give them any leads Don't ever breathe a word anyone about having known him Don't try to find out whether still working in the Terminal"

"You don't mean that he's still there?"

"I don't know I know only that he might be"

"Now?"

"Yes"

"Still?"

"Yes Keep quiet about it, if you don't want to destroy him"

'I think he's gone He won't be back. I haven't seen him since"

"Since when?" she asked sharply

"The end of May The night when you left for Utah, remember" He paused, as the memory of that night's encounter and the

He said waited for h

...ep out of yo

It was John

something or—"

"It was John Galt," she said with a faint mirthless chu "Don't look at the Terminal payroll The name is still there"

"Just like that? All these years?"

"For twelve years Just like that."

"And it's still there now?"

"Yes"

After a moment, he said, "It proves nothing I know The per sonnel office hasn't taken a single name off the payroll list Directive 10 289 If a man quits, they give his job to friend of their own, rather than report

"Don t question the personnel office or anyone Don't call attention to his name If you or I make any inquiries about him, somebody might begin to wonder Don't look for him. Don t make any move in his direction. And if you ever catch sight of him by chance, act as if you didn't know him."

He nodded. After a while, he said, his voice tense and low, "I wouldn t turn him over to them, not even to save the railroad."

"Eddie—"

"Yes?"

"If you ever catch sight of him, tell me."

He nodded.

Two blocks later, he asked quietly, "You re going to quit, one of these days, and vanish, aren't you?"

"Why do you say that?" It was almost a cry

"Aren't you?"

She did not answer at once, when she did the sound of despair was present in her voice only in the form of too tight a monotone

"Eddie if I [illegible]

"Th [illegible]

"Th [illegible]

the [illegible]

should I lose the battle by failing to wait one more moment? How can I let it go—Taggart Transcontinental, Eddie—go forever when one last effort can still keep it in existence? If I ve stood things this long, I can stand them a little longer Just a little longer I m not helping the looters Nothing can help them now"

"What are they going to do?

"I don t know What can they do? They're finished"

"I suppose so"

"D dn't you see them? They re miserable, panic stricken rats, running for their lives"

"Does it mean anything to them?"

"What?"

"Their lives"

"They're still struggling aren t they? But they're through and they know it."

"Have they ever acted on what they know?"

"They'll have to They'll give up It won t be long And we'll be here to save whatever's left."

* *

"Mr Thompson wishes it to be known" said official broadcasts on the morning of November 23 "that there is no cause for alarm He urges the public not to draw any hasty conclusions We must [illegible] morale our unity and our sense of [illegible]

[illegible]

tion or of reckless [illegible] tic forum of public opinion, out of many in t [illegible]

last night has proved, is open to all The truth, says Mr Thompso has many facets We must remain impartial"

"They're silent," wrote Chick Morrison, as a summary of content, across the report from one of the field agents he had sen out on a mission entitled Public Pulse Taking "They're silent," h wrote across the next report, then across another and anothe "Silence," he wrote, with a frown of uneasiness, summing up hi report to Mr Thompson "People seem to be silent"

The flames that went up to the sky of a winter night and de voured a home in Wyoming were not seen by the people of Kansa who watched a trembling red glow on the prairie horizon, made b the flames that went up to devour a farm, and the glow was no reflected by the windows of a street in Pennsylvania, where th twisting red tongues were reflections of the flames that went up t devour a factory Nobody mentioned, next morning, that thos flames had not been set off by chance and that the owners of th three places had vanished Neighbors observed it without commer —and without astonishment. A few homes were found abandone in random corners across the nation, some left locked, shutter and empty, others open and gutted of all movable goods—but peopl watched it in silence and, through the snowdrifts of untended stree in the haze of pre morning darkness, went on trudging to the jobs, a little slower than usual

Then on November 27, a speaker at a political meeting i Cleveland was beaten up and had to escape by scurrying down dar alleys His silent audience had come to sudden life when he ha shouted that the cause of all their troubles was their selfish cor cern with their own troubles

On the morning of November 29, the workers of a shoe factor in Massachusetts were astonished, on entering their workshop t find that the foreman was late But they went to their usual post and went on with their habitual routine, pulling levers pressin buttons, feeding leather into automatic cutters, piling boxes on moving belt, wondering, as the hours went by, why they did no catch sight of the foreman, or the superintendent, or the gener manager, or the company president It was noon before they dis covered that the front offices of the plant were empty

"You goddamn cannibals! screamed a woman in the midst o a crowded movie theater, breaking into sudden, hysterical sobs and the audience showed no sign of astonishment, as if she wer screaming for them all

"There is no cause for alarm," said official broadcasts on Decem ber 5 "Mr Thompson wishes it to be known that he is willing t negotiate with John Galt for the purpose of devising ways an means to achieve a speedy solution of our problems Mr Thomp son urges the people to be patient We must not worry, we mus not doubt we must not lose heart"

The attendants of a hospital in Illinois showed ... ishmen when a man was brought in, beaten up by his ... had supported him all his life the younger ma... elder, accusing him of selfishness and gre...

dants of a hospital in New York City showed no astonishment he case of a woman who came in with a fractured jaw she had n slapped in the face by a total stranger, who had heard her ering her five year-old son to give his best toy to the children neighbors

Chick Morrison attempted a whistle-stop tour to buttress the ntry's morale by speeches on self-sacrifice for the general wel-. He was stoned at the first of his stops and had to return to shington.

Nobody had ever granted them the title of "the better men" or, sting it, had paused to grasp that title's meaning, but everybody w, each in his own community, neighborhood, office or shop and its own unidentified terms, who would be the men that would fail to appear at their posts on some coming morning and ld silently vanish in search of unknown frontiers—the men se faces were tighter than the faces around them, whose eyes more direct, whose energy was more conscientiously enduring e men who were now slipping away, one by one, from every ner of the country—of the country which was now like the endant of what had once been regal glory, prostrated by the rge of hemophilia, losing the best of its blood from a wound to be healed.

But we're willing to negotiate!" yelled Mr Thompson to his stants, ordering the special announcement to be repeated by all o stations three times a day "We're willing to negotiate! He'll it! He'll answer!"

Special listeners were ordered to keep watch day and night, at o receivers tuned to every known frequency of sound, waiting an answer from an unknown transmitter There was no answer

mpty, hopeless, unfocused faces were becoming more apparent e streets of the cities, but no one could read their meaning As men were escaping with their bodies into the underground of habited regions, so others could only save their souls and were ping into the underground of their minds—and no power on could tell whether their blankly indifferent eyes were shutters ecting hidden treasures at the bottom of shafts no longer to be d, or were *merely gaping* holes of the parasite's emptiness r to be filled.

don't know what to do," said the assistant superintendent of oil refinery, refusing to accept the job of the superintendent had vanished—and the agents of the Unification Board were le to tell whether he lied or not. It was only an *edge of pre-* n in the tone of his voice, an absence of apology or shame, made them wonder whether he was a rebel or a fool. It was erous to force the job on either

Give us men!" The plea began to hammer progressively louder t the desk of the Unification Board from all parts of a country ged by unemployment, and neither the pleaders nor the d to add the dangerous words which the cry was imp e us men of ability!" There were waiting lines years' obs of janitors, greasers, porters and bus boys, there

to apply for the jobs of executives, managers, superintendents, engineers.

The explosions of oil refineries, the crashes of defective airplanes, the break-outs of blast furnaces, the wrecks of colliding trains, and the rumors of drunken orgies in the offices of newly created executives, made the men ... of the kind of men who

[illegible]

...n Galt.

Rewards and honors were offered to applicants for managerial jobs—then to foremen—then to skilled mechanics—then to any man who would make an effort to deserve a promotion in rank: wage raises, bonuses, tax exemptions and a medal devised by Wesley Mouch, to be known as 'The Order of Public Benefactors." It ... material

[illegible]

not care to live on present terms.

"Don't despair! Don't give up! John Galt will solve our problems!" said the radio voices of official broadcasts, traveling through the silence of falling snow into the silence of unheated homes.

"Don't tell them that we haven't got him!" cried Mr. Thompson to his assistants. "But for God's sake tell them to find him!" Squads of Chick Morrison's boys were assigned to the task of manufacturing rumors: half of them went spreading the story that John Galt was in Washington and in conference with government officials—while the other half went spreading the story that the government would give five hundred thousand dollars as reward for information that would help to find John Galt.

"No, not a clue," said Wesley Mouch to Mr. Thompson, summing up the reports of the special agents who had been sent to check on every man by the name of John Galt throughout the country. "They're a shabby lot. There's a John Galt who's a professor of ornithology, eighty years old, ... greengrocer with a

[illegible]

the daytime—but at night, every hour on the hour, by a secret, official order, an appeal was sent from short wave transmitters into the empty reaches of space: "Calling John Galt! . . . Calling John Galt! . . . Are you listening, John Galt? . . . We wish to negotiate. We wish to confer with you. Give us word on where you can be reached . . . Do you hear us, John Galt?" There was no answer.

The wads of worthless ... heavier in the

[illegible]

ter, it was now approaching the price of two hundred—while the printing presses of the government treasury were running a race with starvation and losing

When the workers of a factory beat up their foreman and wrecked the machinery in a fit of despair—no action could be taken against them. Arrests were futile, the jails were full, the arresting officers winked at their prisoners and let them escape on their way to prison—men were going through the motions prescribed for the moment, with no thought of the moment to follow No action could be taken when mobs of starving people attacked warehouses on the outskirts of cities No action could be taken when punitive squadrons joined the people they had been sent to punish

"Are you listening John Galt? We wish to negotiate We might meet your terms Are you listening?"

There were whispered rumors of covered wagons traveling by night through abandoned trails and of secret settlements armed to resist the attacks of those whom they called the "Indians"—the attacks of any looting savages, be they homeless mobs or government agents Lights were seen, once in a while on the distant horizon of a prairie in the hills on the ledges of mountains, where no buildings had been known to exist. But no soldiers could be per-

of crumbling

re appeared

the curving

mark which was the sign of the dollar

"Can you hear us, John Galt? Send us word Name your terms We will meet any terms you set. Can you hear us?"

There was no answer

The shaft of red smoke that shot to the sky on the night of January 22 and stood abnormally still for a while like a solemn memorial obelisk, then wavered and swept back and forth across the sky, like a searchlight sending some undecipherable message,

of Rear-

it. They

ad cursed

—looked

familiar

deserter

ed to run

a pudgy

hangers-on of the metallurgical industry who had wanted nothing but to follow his employees while going through the motions of leading But at the end of a month after too many clashes with the workers too many occasions when his only answer had been that he couldn't help it, too many undelivered orders, too many phonic pressures from his buddies he had begged to be to some other position The Orren Boyle faction had been part, since Mr Boyle had been confined to a rest home doctor had him any contact with business

him to the job of weaving baskets as a means of occupationa therapy The second Peoples Manager sent to Rearden Steel ha belonged to the faction of Cuffy Meigs He had worn leather leg gings and perfumed hair lotions he had come to work with a gu on his hip he had kept snapping that discipline was his goal and that by God he d get it or else The only discernible ru of the discipline had been his order forbidd ng all questions Afte weeks of frantic activity on the part of insurance companies, o firemen of ambulances and of first aid units attend ng to a serie of inexplicable accidents—the "People s Manager" had vanished one morning having sold and shipped to sundry racketeers of Europ and Latin America most of the cranes the automatic conveyors the supplies of refractory brick the emergency power generator and the carpet from what had once been Reardens office

No one had been able to untangle the issues in the violent chao of the next few days—the issues had never been named the s de had remained unacknowledged but everyone had known that the bloody encounters between the older workers and the newer had not been driven to such ferocious intensity by the trivial causes that kept setting them off—neither guards nor policemen nor state troopers had been able to keep order for the length of a day—nor could any faction muster a candidate willing to accept the post of "People s Manager On January 22 the operations of Rearden Steel had been ordered temporarily suspended

The shaft of red smoke that night, had been caused by a s sty-year-old worker who had set fire to one of the structures and had been caught in the act laughing dazedly and staring at the flames. "To avenge Hank Rearden! he had cried defiantly tears running down his furnace-tanned face

Don t let it hurt you like this—thought Dagny slumped across her desk over the page of the newspaper where a single brief paragraph announced the "temporary" end of Rearden Steel—don't let it hurt you so much She kept seeing the face of Hank Rearden, as he had stood at the window of his office watching a crane move against the sky with a load of green blue rail Don t let it hurt him like this—was the plea in her mind addressed to no one—don t let him hear of it don't let him know Then she saw another face a face with unflinching green eyes saying to her in a voice made implacable by the quality of respect for facts "You'll have to hear about it You'll hear about every wreck. You'll hear about every discontinued train. Nobody stays in this valley by faking real ty in any manner whatever " Then she sat still with no sight and no sound in her mind with nothing but that enormous presence which was pain—until she heard the familiar cry that had become a drug killing all sensations except the capacity to act "Miss Taggart we don t know what to do!"—and she shot to her feet to answer

"The People s State of Guatemala," said the newspapers on January 26 "declines the request of the United State loan of thousand tons of steel "

On the night of February 3 a young pilot w

route, a weekly flight from Dallas to New York City. When he reached the empty darkness beyond Philadelphia—in the place where the flames of Rearden Steel had for years been his favorite landmark, his greeting in the loneliness of night, the beacon of a living earth—he saw a snow-covered spread, dead white and phosphorescent in the starlight, a spread of peaks and craters that looked like the surface of the moon He quit his job, next morning

Through the frozen nights over dying cities knocking in vain

"...we don't know what to do," said Mr Thompson, [who] had summoned her to a personal conference on one of his scurrying trips to New York. "We're ready to give in, to meet his terms, to let him take over—but where is he?"

"For the third time," she said, her face and voice shut tight against any fissure of emotion, "I do not know where he is What made you think I did?"

"Well, I didn't know, I had to try . I thought, just in case . . I thought, maybe if you had a way to reach him—"

"I haven't."

"You see, we can't announce not even by short-wave radio that we're willing to surrender altogether People might hear it. But if you had some way to reach him, to let him know that we're ready to give in, to scrap our policies, to do anything he tells us to—"

"I said I haven't."

"If he d ...

"...esn't he answer?"

"You've heard his speech"

"But what are we to do? We can't just quit and leave the country without any government at all. I shudder to think what would happen. With the k... on the loose—why, Miss ... we'd have plunder ... now what's got into ... any more We can't ... nor run things any

"Start lifting taxes and removing controls"

"Oh, no, no, no! That's out of the question!"

"Out of whose question?"

"I mean, not at this time, Miss Taggart, not at this time ...untry isn't ready for it. Personally, I'd agree with you ...edom-loving man, Miss Taggart, I'm not after power—but ... emergency. People aren't ready for freedom. We've got

a strong hand We can t adopt an idealistic theory which—"

"Then don t ask me what to do she said and rose to her f

But Miss Taggart—"

I didn t come here to argue "

She was at the door when he s ghed and said I hope he s alive She stopped I hope they haven t done anything rash"

A moment passed before she was able to ask "Who?" and make it a word not a scream

He shrugged spreading his arms and letting them drop h lessly I can t hold my own boys in line any longer I can t what they might attempt to do There s one clique—the Fer Lawson Meigs faction—that s been after me for over a year to ad stronger measures A tougher policy they mean Frankly what t mean is to resort to terror Introduce the death penalty for civil crimes for critics d ssenters and the l ke Their argument is t since people won t co-operate won t act for the public inte voluntarily we ve got to force them to Nothing will make system work they say but terror And they may be right fr the look of things nowadays But Wesley won't go for strong-a methods Wesley is a peaceful man a liberal and so am I We trying to keep the Ferris boys in check but You see they set against any surrender to John Galt They don t want us to d with h m They don t want us to find him I wouldn t put anyth past them If they found him first they d—there s no tell ng wl they might do That s what worries me Why doesn t he swer? Why hasn t he answered us at all? What if they ve found h and killed h m? I wouldn t know So I hoped that perh you had some way some means of knowing that he s s alive " His voice trailed off into a question mark

The whole of her resistance against a rush of l quefying ter went into the effort to keep her voice as stiff as her knees lo enough to say "I do not know" and her knees stiff enough to ca her out of the room

* *

From behind the rotted posts of what had once been a corn vegetable stand Dagny glanced furtively back at the street the ra lamp posts broke the street into separate islands she could see pawnshop in the first patch of l ght a saloon in the next a chur in the farthest and black gaps between them the s dewalks we deserted it was hard to tell but the street seemed empty

She turned the corner w th deliberately resonant steps th stopped abruptly to l sten it was hard to tell whether the abnorm t ghtness inside her chest was the sound of her own heartbeats a hard to distinguish it from the sound of distant wheels and fro the glassy rustle wh ch was the East River somewhere close by b she heard no sound of human steps behind her She jerked h shoulders it was part-shrug part-shudder and she walked faste A rusty clock in some unl ghted cavern coughed out the hour four A M

The fear of be ng followed d d not seem fully real as no fe d be real to her now She wondered whether the unnatural Lgh

ss of her body was a state of tension or relaxation her body
med drawn so tightly that she felt as if it were reduced to a
gle attribute to the power of motion her mind seemed inac
sibly relaxed, like a motor set to the automatic control of an
olute no longer to be questioned If a naked bullet could feel
mid flight, this is what it would feel she thought just the
tion and the goal, nothing else She thought it vaguely distantly
if her own person were unreal only the word "naked seemed
each her naked stripped of all concern but for the target
for the number "367" the number of a house on the East
er which her mind kept repeating the number it had so long
d forbidden to consider

Three-sixty seven—she thought looking for an invisible shape
ad among the angular forms of tenements—three sixty seven
that is where he lives if he lives at all Her calm
detachment and the confidence of her steps came from the
tainty that this was an 'if' with which she could not exist any
ger

She had existed with it for ten days—and the nights behind her
e a single progression that had brought her to this night as if
momentum now driving her steps were the sound of her own
nnels of the Terminal She
nels she had walked for
shift he had once worked
platforms and shops and
twist of abandoned tracks asking no questions of anyone
ing no explanations of her presence She had walked with no
e of fear or hope moved by a feeling of desperate loyalty that
almost a feeling of pride The root of that feeling was the
nents when she had stopped in sudden astonishment in some
subterranean corner and had heard the words half stated in
mind This is my railroad—as she looked at a vault vibrating
ne sound of distant wheels this is my life—as she felt the clot

that you are only to see
to speak not to touch you only to see when she had noticed the
She had abandoned her search when she had noticed the
us wondering glances of the underground workers, following

she uttered and, together, a stab of pride that it did not matt her any longer—she had looked at the exhausted, brutalized of men who did not care whether they were ordered to work listen to meaningless sounds She had not seen his face a them 'Was everyone present? she had asked the foreman. " I guess so he had answered indifferently

She had loitered at the Terminal entrances, watching the m they came to work. But there were too many entrances to and no place where she could watch while remaining unseen had stood in the soggy twilight on a sidewalk glittering with pressed to the wall of a warehouse, her coat collar raised to cheekbones raindrops falling off the brim of her hat—she

her quest if there was no John Galt among them , it was no John Galt in the world she thought, then no danger ex —and no world.

No danger and no world, she thought—as she walked thr the streets of the slums toward a house with the number " which was or was not his home She wondered whether this what one felt while awaiting a verdict of death no fear, no a no concern, nothing but the icy detachment of light without he of cognition without values

A tin can clattered from under her toes, and the sound beating too loudly and too long as if against the walls of abandoned city The streets seemed razed by exhaustion, not by as if the men inside the walls were not asleep but had collap He would be home from work at this hour, she thought worked if he still had a home She looked at the sh of the slums at the crumbling plaster, the peeling paint the fa signboards of failing shops with unwanted goods in unwas windows the sagging steps unsafe to climb, the clotheslines of ments unfit to wear, the undone, the unattended, the given up incomplete all the twisted monuments of a losing race against enemies "no time" and no strength"— and she thought that was the place where *he* had lived for twelve years he who p sessed such extravagant power to lighten the job of human ex ence

Some memory kept struggling to reach her, then came back name was Starnesville She felt the sensation of a shudder But is New York City!—she cried to herself in defense of the gr ness she had loved, then she faced with unmoving austerity verdict pronounced by her mind a city that had left him in th slums for twelve years was damned and doomed to the future Starnesville

Then abruptly it ceased to matter, she felt a peculiar shock the shock of sudden silence, a sense of stillness within her wh she took for a sense of calm she saw the number "367" above door of an ancient tenement.

She was calm, she thought, it was only time that had suddenly

[illegible]

... of a doorway and saw the words "John Galt, 5 B," ... awled in pencil by some illiterate hand—then the moment when stopped at the foot of a stairway, glanced up at the vanishing gles of the railing and suddenly leaned against the wall, trembling th terror, preferring not to know—then the moment when she t the movement of her foot coming to rest on the first of the ps—then a single, unbroken progression of lightness of rising thout effort or doubt or fear, of feeling the twisting installments stairway dropping down beneath her unhesitant feet, as if the mentum of her irresistible rise were coming from the straight- s of her body, the poise of her shoulders, the lift of her head l the solemnly exultant certainty that in the moment of ultimate nsion, it was not disaster she expected of her life, at the end of sing stairway she had needed thirty-seven years to climb

At the top, she saw a narrow hallway its walls converging to an ighted door She heard the floorboards creaking in the silence, un- her steps She felt the pressure of her finger on a doorbell and rd the sound of ringing in the unknown space beyond. She waited. heard the brief crack of a board, but it came from the floor be- She heard the sliding wail of a tugboat somewhere on the river. n she knew that she had missed some span of time, because her t awareness was not like a moment of awakening, but like a ment of birth as if two sounds were pulling her out of a void, sound of a step behind the door and the sound of a lock being ed—but she was not present until the moment when suddenly re was no door before her and the figure standing on the thresh- was John Galt standing casually in his own doorway dressed slacks and shirt, the angle of his waistline slanting faintly inst the light behind him

he knew that his eyes were grasping this moment then sweeping f its past and its future, that a lightning process of calculation bringing it into his conscious control—and by the time a fold his shirt moved with the motion of his breath, he knew the —and the sum was a smile of radiant greeting

he was now unable to move He seized her arm, he jerked her de the room, she felt the clinging pressure of his mouth she the slenderness of his body through the suddenly alien stiffness er coat. She saw the laughter in his eyes, she felt the touch of mouth again and again, she was sagging in his arms, she was thing in gasps, as if she had not breathed for five flights of s, her face was pressed to the angle between his neck and shoul- to hold him, to hold him with her arms, her hands and the skin er cheek.

ohn . . . you're alive . . ." was all she could say

e nodded, as if he knew what the words were intended to t.

hen he picked up her hat that had fallen to the floor, he

off her coat and put it aside, he looked at her slender tremb figure, a sparkle of approval in his eyes, his hand moving over tight high collared dark blue sweater that gave to her body fragility of a schoolgirl and the tension of a fighter

'The next time I see you,' he said, "wear a white one It' look wonderful too"

She realized that she was dressed as she never appeared in pub as she had been dressed at home through the sleepless hours of t night She laughed, rediscovering the ability to laugh she l expected his first words to be anything but that.

If there is a next time," he added calmly

"What do you mean?'

He went to the door and locked it 'Sit down," he said.

She remained standing, but she took the time to glance at t room she had not noticed a long bare garret with a bed in c corner and a gas stove in another, a few pieces of wooden fur ture naked boards stressing the length of the floor, a single la burning on a desk, a closed door in the shadows beyond the lam circle—and New York City beyond an enormous window, the spre of angular structures and scattered lights, and the shaft of the Ta gart Building far in the distance

Now listen carefully," he said "We have about half an hour think I know why you came here I told you that it would be ha to stand and that you would be likely to break. Don t regret it Y see?—I can t regret it, either But now, we have to know how act from here on In about half an hour, the looters agents, w

in

u're the last link to me, and would not let you out of his sight—or t sight of his spies"

I wasn't followed! I watched I—"

You wouldn t know how to notice it. Sneaking is one art they expert at. Whoever followed you is reporting to his bosses right no Your presence in this district at this hour, my name on the box downstairs the fact that I work for your railroad—it s enough eve

ow You

mmed

hen the

call N

come he

not qui

middle

take A

hands "ow you must take *their* side"

What?"

"You must take their side as fully consistently and loudly a ir capacity for deception will permit. You must act as one o You must act as my worst enemy If you do, I'll have t

hance to come out of it alive They need me too much, they'll go to ny extreme before they bring themselves to kill me Whatever ey extort from people, they can extort it only through their vic-ms' values—and they have no value of mine to hold over my head, othing to threaten me with. But if they get the slightest suspicion f what we are to each other, they will have you on a torture rack -I mean, physical torture—before my eyes, in less than a week I n not going to wait for that. At the first mention of a threat to ou, I will kill myself and stop them right there"

He said it without emphasis, in the same impersonal tone of practi-l calculation as the rest. She knew that he meant it and that he as right to mean it· she saw in what manner she alone had the wer to succeed at destroying him, where all the power of his

wer of deceit you can command, but convince them that you te me Then we'll have a chance to remain alive and to escape—lon't know when or how, but I ll know that I'm free to act Is this derstood?"

She forced herself to lift her head, to look straight at him and nod

"When they come," he said, "tell them that you had been try-to find me for them, that you became suspicious when you saw name on your payroll list and that you came here to investigate"

She nodded

"I will stall about admitting my identity—they might recognize voice ... ll be *you* who'll

... e hundred thou-d-dollar reward they've offered for my capture"

She closed her eyes, then nodded

"Dagny," he said slowly, there is no way to serve your own ues under their system Sooner or later, whether you intended it not, they had to bring you to the point where the only thing can do for me is to turn against me Gather your strength and it—then we'll earn this one half hour and, perhaps, the future"

"I'll do it," she said firmly, and added, "if that is what happens, hey—"

It will happen Don't regret it. I won't. You haven't seen the ure of our enemies You'll see it now If I have to be the pawn the demonstration that will convince you, I m willing to be—to win you from them, once and for all You didn t want to t any longer? Oh, Dagny Dagny, neither did I!"

t was the way he held her, the way he kissed her mouth

made her feel as if every step she had taken every danger eve doubt even her treason against him, if it was treason, all of were giving her an exultant right to this moment He saw t struggle in her face, the tension of an incredulous protest agai herself—and she heard the sound of his voice through the stran of her hair pressed to his lips Don't think of them now Nev think of pain or danger or enemies a moment longer than is nece sary to fight them You re here It s our time and our life not then Don't struggle not to be happy You are '

"At the risk of destroying you?" she whispered

You won't. But—yes, even that You don't think it's indifferenc do you? Was it indifference that broke you and brought you here

I— And then the violence of the truth made her pull t mouth down to hers then throw the words at his face "I didi care whether either one of us lived afterwards, just to see you th once!

I would have been disappointed if you hadn t come"

"Do you know what it was like waiting fighting it, delaying one more day then one more then—"

He chuckled "Do I?" he said softly

Her hand dropped in a helpless gesture she thought of his t years When I heard your voice on the radio" she said "when heard the greatest statement I ever . No, I have no right tell you what I thought of it.

"Why not?

"You think that I haven t accepted it."

"You will"

"Were you speaking from here?"

'No from the valley"

"And then you returned to New York?"

"The next morning"

"And you ve been here ever since?

'Yes

'Have you heard the kind of appeals they're sending out to yo every night?"

"Sure"

She glanced slowly about the room her eyes moving from t towers of the city in the window to the wooden rafters of his ceil to the cracked plaster of his walls, to the iron posts of his be "You ve been here all that time" she said "You've lived here f twelve years here like this "

"Like this" he said throwing open the door at the end of the roo

She gasped the long light flooded windowless space beyond th threshold enclosed in a shell of softly lustrous metal like a stre ballroom aboard a submarine, was the most efficiently modern la oratory she had ever seen

"Come in" he said grinning "I don t have to keep secrets fro you any longer"

It was like crossing the border into a different universe S looked at the complex equipment sparkling in a bright diffus w, at the mesh of glittering wires, at the blackboard chalk

th mathematical formulas, at the long counters of objects shaped

You wanted to know where I worked for eleven months out of the year," he said

"All this" she asked, pointing at the laboratory, "on the salary"—she pointed at the garret— of an unskilled laborer?

"Oh no! On the royalties Midas Mulligan pays me for his power-use, for the ray screen, for the radio transmitter and a few other ...s of that kind"

"Then then why did you have to work as a track laborer?"

"Because no money earned in the valley is ever to be spent outside"

"Where did you get this equipment?"

"I designed it Andrew Stockton's foundry made it" He pointed an unobtrusive object the size of a radio cabinet in a corner of the room "There's the motor you wanted" and chuckled at her ...sp at the involuntary jolt that threw her forward "Don't bother ...dying it you won't give it away to them now

She was staring at the shining metal cylinders and the glistening ...ils of wire that suggested the rusted shape resting like a sacred ...lic in a glass coffin in a vault of the Taggart Terminal

"It supplies my own electric power for the laboratory" he said ...o one has had to wonder why a track laborer is using such ex...bitant amounts of electricity'

"But if they ever found this place—"

He gave an odd, brief chuckle "They won't."

"How long have you been—?'

She stopped this time, she did not gasp the sight confronting her ...uld not be greeted by anything except a moment of total inner ...llness on the wall, behind a row of machinery she saw a picture ...t out of a newspaper—a picture of her in slacks and shirt stand...g by the side of the engine at the opening of the John Galt Line, ...r head lifted, her smile holding the context the meaning and the ...nlight of that day

A moan was her only answer as she turned to him, but the look ... his face matched hers in the picture.

"I was the symbol of what you wanted to destroy in the world," ... said "But you were my symbol of what I wanted to achieve" ... pointed at the picture "This is how men expect to feel about ...

... his ... nts ... ner,

...uched by pain or fear, the reality of Halley's ...

...is was the reward they had wanted fought for and won.

a d smell

ear that you have been found."
"Mr.

...y think in such old fashioned terms Our job is only to scort you safely to the top councils of the national leadership, here your presence is urgently needed He paused, but got no nswer "The country's top leaders desire to confer with you—ist to confer and to reach a friendly understanding."

The soldiers were finding nothing but garments and kitchen utensils, there were no letters, no books, not even a newspaper, as if the oom were the habitation of an illiterate

"Our objective is only to assist you to assume your rightful place n society, Mr Galt. You do not seem to realize your own public alue"

"I do"

"We are here only to protect you."

"Locked!" declared a soldier, banging his fist against the laboratory door

The leader assumed an ingratiating smile What is behind that loor, Mr Galt?"

"Private property"

"Would you open it please?'

"No"

The leader spread his hands out in a gesture of pained helplessness "Unfortunately, my hands are tied Orders you know We have to enter that room"

"Enter it."

"It's only a formality, a mere formality There's no reason why hings should not be handled amicably Won't you please co-operate?"

"I said no"

"I'm sure you wouldn't want us to resort to any unnecessary means" He got no answer "We have the authority to break hat door down you know—but, of course we wouldn't want to o it." He waited, but got no answer "Force that lock!" he snapped o the soldier

Dagny glanced at Galt's face He stood impassively, his head held level she saw the undisturbed lines of his profile His eyes

...were ...urth

nvoluntary while the burglar's tools ... the wood of the door vent grating cautiously against the wood of the door and small chips fell down

The wood gave way easily and small chips fell down buds magnified by the silence into the rattle of a dista

the four guards who had stood outside the door of the royal suite since five A.M., opened it at eleven A.M. to admit Mr Thompson, and locked it again

Mr Thompson experienced a brief flash of uneasiness when the click of the lock cut off his escape and left him alone with the pris oner ... headlines and the radio ...e country since dawn ...w York!—John Galt has ...in conference with the

"How do you do," said Galt.

Mr Thompson thudded down on a chair the brusqueness of the movement suggesting a cheerily businesslike attitude "Now don't go imagining that you're under arrest or some such nonsense" He pointed at the room. "This is no jail, as you can see You can see that we'll treat you right. You're a big person a very big person—and we know it. Just make yourself at home Ask for anything you please. Fire any flunky that doesn't obey you And if you take a dislike to any of the army boys outside just breathe the word—and we'll send another one to replace him"

He paused expectantly He received no answer

"The only reason we brought you here is just that we wanted to talk to you. We wouldn't have done it this way but you left us no choice You kept hiding And all we wanted was a chance to tell you that you got us all wrong."

He spread his hands out, palms up with a disarming smile. Galt's eyes were watching him, without answer

"That was some speech you made Boy are you an orator! You've done something to the country—I don't know what or why, but you have People seem to want something you've got. But you thought we'd be dead set against it? That's where you're wrong We're not. Personally I think there was plenty in that speech that made sense. Yes sir, I do Of course I don't agree with every word you said—but what the hell, you don't expect us to agree with every thing, do you? Differences of opinion—that's what makes horse racing Me I'm always willing to change my mind I'm open to any argument."

He leaned forward invitingly He obtained no answer

"The world is in a hell of a mess Just as you said. *There,* I agree with you. We have a point in common We can start from that. Something's got to be done about it. All I wanted was—Look," he cried suddenly "why don't you let me talk to *you*?"

"You are talking to me."

"I ... well, that is . . . well, you know what I mean."

"Fully."

"That's impossible! That's fantastic! That's out of the question!"
"You see? I told you we had nothing to d scuss"
"Now wait! Wait! Don't go to extremes! There s always a middle ground. You can t have everything. We aren t people aren t ady for it. You can t expect us to ditch the machinery of State 'e've got to preserve the system. But we re willing to amend it. e'll modify it any way you wish. We re not stubborn, theoretical ogmatists—we re flexible We'll do anything you say We'll give u a free hand. We'll co-operate We'll compromise We'll split ty fifty We'll keep the sphere of politics and give you total wer over the sphere of economics We'll turn the production of e country over to you we'll make you a present of the entire onomy You'll run it any way you wish, you'll give the orders, u'll issue the directives—and you'll have the organized power of e State at your command to enforce your decis ons We'll stand ady to obey you all of us, from me on down. In the field of oduction, we'll do whatever you say You'll be—you'll be the onomic Dictator of the nation"
Galt burst out laughing.
It was the simple amusement of the laughter that shocked Mr ompson. "What's the matter with you?"
"So that's your idea of a compromise is it?"
"What's the ? Don t sit there grinning like that! I n t think you understood me I'm offering you *Wesley Mouch's* —and there s nothing bigger that anyone could offer you! u'll be free to do anything you wish If you don t like controls— peal them. If you want higher profits and lower wages—decree em. If you want special privileges for the big tycoons—grant em. If you don t like labor unions—dissolve them. If you want free economy—order people to be free Play it any way you ease. But get things going. Get the country organized. Make op work again. Make them produce Bring back your own n—the men of brains. Lead us to a peaceful, scientific industrial " and to prosperity"
"At the point of a gun?"
"Now look, I Now what's so damn funny about it?"
"Will you tell me just one thing if you re able to pretend that u haven t heard a word I said on the radio what makes you nk I'd be willing to pretend that I haven t said it?"
"I don t know what you mean I—"
"Skip it. It was just a rhetorical question. The first part of it swers the second."
"Huh?"
"I don't play your kind of games, brother—if you want a transon."
"Do you mean that you re refusing my offer?"
"I am."
"But why?"
"It took me three hours on the radio to tell you why"
"Oh, that's just theory! I'm talking business. I'm offering atest job in the Will you tell me what's wrong

"I can offer you anything you can ask. Just name it."

"You name it."

"Well, you talked a lot about wealth If it's money that you want —you couldn't make in three lifetimes what I can hand over to you in a minute, this minute, cash on the barrel Want a billion dollars —a cool, neat billion dollars?'

"Which *I'll* have to produce, for you to give me?"

"No, I mean straight out of the public treasury, in fresh, new bills . . . or . . . or even in gold, if you prefer'

"What will it buy me?'

"Oh, look, when the country gets back on its feet—"

"When *I* put it back on its feet?"

"Well, if what you want is to run things your own way, if its power that you're after, I'll guarantee you that every man woman and child in this country will obey your orders and do whatever you wish."

"After *I* teach them to do it?"

"If you want anything for your own gang—for all those men who've disappeared—jobs, positions, authority tax exemptions, any special favor at all—just name it and they'll get it"

"After *I* bring them back?"

"Well, what on earth *do* you want?"

"What on earth do I need *you* for?"

"Huh?"

"What have you got to offer me that I couldn t get without you?"

There was a different look in Mr Thompson s eyes when he drew back, as if cornered, yet looked straight at Galt for the first time and said slowly, "Without me, you couldn t get out of this room, right now"

Galt smiled. "True"

"You wouldn't be able to produce anything You could be left here to starve"

"True."

"Well, don't you see?" The loudness of homey joviality came back into Mr Thompson's voice, as if the hint given and received were now to be safely evaded by means of humor "What I've got to offer you is your life"

"Its not yours to offer, Mr Thompson," said Galt softly

Something about his voice made Mr Thompson jerk to glance at him, then jerk faster to look away Galts smile seemed almost gentle

"Now," said Galt, "do you see what I meant when I said that a [illegible] grant you
[illegible] not
[illegible] th-
[illegible] not
[illegible]

"Who . . . who's said anything about murdering you"

"Who s said anything about anything else? If you weren't hol

ing me here at the point of a gun, under threat of *death*,

wouldn't have a chance to speak to me at all. And *that* is as

'I want you to think!"
'How will your gun make me do that, Mr Thompson?"
Mr Thompson looked at him silently—and Galt saw, in the tened lips, in the jutting chin in the narrowed eyes, the look an adolescent bully about to utter that philosophical argument ich is expressed by the sentence I'll bash your teeth in Galt led, looking straight at him, as if hearing the unspoken sentence l underscoring it. Mr Thompson looked away
'No " said Galt, "you don't want me to think When you force

ır Thompson sighed "I don't get it," he said in a tone of genu- helplessness "Something's off and I can't figure it out Why uld you ask for trouble? With a brain like yours—you can beat 'body I'm no match for you, and you know it. Why don't you tend to join us, then gain control and outsmart me?"
For the same reason that makes you offer it because you'd win."
'Huh?"
'Because it s the attempt of your betters to beat you on *your* ns that has allowed your kind to get away with it for centuries. ıch one of us would succeed, if I were to compete with you control over your musclemen? Sure, I could pretend—and I uldn't save your economy or your system, nothing will save them v—but I d perish and what you d win would be what you've al- ys won in the past a postponement, one more stay of execution, another year—or month—bought at the price of whatever hope l effort might still be squeezed out of the best of the human nnants left around you, including me That's all you re after and t is the length of your range A month? You'd settle for a week on the unchallenged absolute that there will always be another lim to find. But you've found your last victim—the one who re- es to play his historical part. The game is up, brother"
'Oh, that s just theory!" snapped Mr Thompson a little too arply, his eyes were roving about the room, in the manner of a ostitute for pacing he glanced at the door, as if longing to escape ou say that if we don't give up the system, we'll perish?" he asked.
'Yes"
'Then, since we're holding you, you will perish with us?"
'Possibly"
'Don't you want to live?"
'Passionately" He saw the snap of a spark in Mr Thompson's s and smiled. "I'll tell you more I know that I want to live ch more intensely than you do I know that that's what you re inting on I know that you, in fact, do not want to live at all. I nt it. And because I want it so much, I will accept no substitute "
Mr Thompson jumped to his feet. "*That's not true*!" he crie ly not wanting to live—it s not true! Why do you talk like th : stood, his limbs drawn faintly together, as if against a ll "Why do you ? I don't know what you : backed a few nd it's not true that I m a

ck Morrison s voice when he spoke to a circle of faces in Mr ompson s room on the fifty ninth floor The look of the faces ched the sound of his voice.

It doesn t seem to work," he said pointing to a pile of reports n his publ c pulse takers "All the press releases about our aborating with John Galt don t seem to make any difference ple don t care They don t believe a word of it. Some of them that he'll never collaborate with us Most of them don t even eve that we ve got him I don't know what s happened to people y don t believe anything any more " He sighed 'Three fac- yesterday Five sco—"

ning the muffler e out of order

u s no cho ce about it he s *got* to gi e in and take over i got to "

Vesley Mouch glanced at the ceiling "Don t ask me to talk to again," he said and shuddered "I've tried. One can t talk to man."

I cant Mr Thompson! cried Ch ck Morr son, in answer he stop of Mr Thompson s roving glance I'll res gn, if you t me to I can't talk to him again! Don't make me

Nobody can talk to him said Dr Floyd Ferris "It s a waste of . He doesn t hear a word you say

red Kinnan chuckled "You mean he hears too much, don't ? And what s worse he answers it."

Well why don t *you* try it again?" snapped Mouch You seem ave enjoyed it Why don't *you* try to persuade him?

I know better " sa d Kinnan "Don t fool yourself brother No y s go ng to persuade him I won't try it twice Enjoyed he added with a look of astonishment "Yeah yeah, I ss I d d"

What s the matter with you? Are you falling for him? Are you ng him w n you over?"

Me?" Kinnan chuckled mirthlessly "What use would he have me? I'll be the first one to go down the dra n when he wins. Its only"—he glanced wistfully up at the ceiling—"it s only he s a man who talks stra ght."

He won t win " snapped Mr Thompson. "It s out of the ques "

here was a long pause

There are hunger riots in West Virgin a " sa d Wesley Mouch. d the farmers in Texas have—"

Mr Thompson " sa d Chick Morrison desperately "Maybe ybe we could let the publ c see him at a mass rally or ybe on TV just see him just so they d bel eve that we've lly got h m It would g ve people hope for a while ould g ve us a l ttle time.

Too dangerous " snapped Dr Ferris. "Don't let h m come ere near the public. There s no limit to what he'll permit to do "

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[illegible] g the muffler [illegible] out of order

"There s no cho ce about it he s *got* to give in and take over [illegible] got to"

Wesley Mouch glanced at the ceiling. "Don't ask me to talk to him again" he said and shuddered "I ve tried. One can t talk to that man."

[illegible]

He doesn t hear a word you say"

Fred Kinnan chuckled "You mean, he hears too much, don't you? And what s worse he answers it."

"Well why don t *you* try it again?" snapped Mouch "You seem to have enjoyed it Why don t *you* try to persuade him?"

"I know better" said Kinnan. "Don t fool yourself brother Nobody's go ng to persuade him I won t try it twice Enjoyed [illegible]" he added with a look of astonishment. "Yeah yeah I guess I d d."

"What s the matter with you? Are you falling for him? Are you letting him win you over?"

"Me?" Kinnan chuckled mirthlessly "What use would he have for me? I'll be the first one to go down the dra n when *he wins.* It s only"—he glanced wistfully up at the ce ling—"it s only that he s a man who talks stra ght."

"He won t win!" snapped Mr Thompson. "It s out of the question"

There was a long pause

"There are hunger riots in West Virginia" sa d Wesley Mouch. "And the farmers in Texas have—"

"Mr Thompson" said Ch ck Morrison desperately "Maybe we could let the publ c see h m at a mass rally or maybe we could let the publ c see *him,* just so they d believe that we've got h m maybe on TV just see *him,* It would give people hope for a while It would g ve us a l ttle time."

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...t doesn't seem to work," he said pointing to a pile of reports

...uld his throat the building's furnace had gone out of order ...here's no choice about it he's *got* to give in and take over ...'s got to!"

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...ell ...

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...ss I ...

What's the matter with you? Are you falling for him? Are you ...ing him win you over?"

"Me?" Kinnan chuckled mirthlessly "What use would he have ...me? I'll be the first one to go down the drain when he wins. ... It's only"—he glanced wistfully up at the ceiling—"it's only ...t he's a man who talks straight."

"He won't win!" snapped Mr Thompson. "It's out of the ques...n!"

There was a long pause

"There are hunger riots in West Virginia," said Wesley Mouch. ...nd the farmers in Texas have—"

"Mr. Th... ybe ... or ... at we've ... bile ... ome any... mit him-

ıtıng silently at the closed cashıer's window of a plant whose
ʼner had vanished

"The farmers of South Dakota," Wesley Mouch reported to Mr
ıompson, next morning "are marching on the state capital, burn-
ʒ every government building on their way, and every home worth
ɔre than ten thousand dollars "

"Californıa's blown to pieces," he reported in the evening
here's a civil war going on there—if that's what it is, which
ɓody seems to be sure of They've declared that they're seceding
ɔm the Union, but nobody knows who s now in power There's
med fighting all over the state, between a 'People's Party,' led by
a Chalmers and her soybean cult of Orient admirers—and some-
ing called 'Back to God,' led by some former oil field owners "

"Miss Taggart!" moaned Mr Thompson when she entered his
ɔtel room next morning, in answer to his summons. "What are we
ɔing to do?"

He wondered why he had once felt that she possessed some reas-
ɪring kind of energy He was looking at a blank face that seemed
ɪmposed but the composure became disquieting when one noticed
ıat it lasted for minute after minute, with no change of expression,
ɔ sign of feeling Her face had the same look as all the others
ɛ thought, except for something in the set of the mouth that

re brains than all my

country than any of

are we to do? With
verything falling to pieces, he's the only one who can lead us out
f this mess—but he won't He refuses He simply refuses to lead.
ve never seen anything like it a man who has no desire to com-
ıand. We beg him to give orders—and he answers that he wants to
bey them! It's preposterous!"

"It is "

"What do you make of it? Can you figure him out?"

"He s an arrogant egoist," she said He s an ambitious adven-
ırer He's a man of unlimited audacity who's playing for the big-
ɛst stakes in the world "

It was easy, she thought It would have been difficult in that dis-
ınt time when she had regarded language as a tool of honor al-
ays to be used as if one were under oath—an oath of allegiance

atch Mr Thompson's with glances of triumph at his assistants,
That's my girl!" uttered with whose judgment in trusting her had been
ıe triumph of a man been easy to express an angry hatred for G
ındicated It had been with his ideas, but I won t let him
–"I used to agree Thompson say, "Don't you
ailroad!"—and to m him!"
'aggart! We'll

what if he holds out too long?"

"He won't. He's too practical for that. By the way, are you [letting] him hear any news about the state of the country?"

"Why . . . no."

"I would suggest that you let him have copies of your confidential [re]ports. He'll see that it won't be long now."

"That's a good idea! A very good idea! . . . You know, Miss [Ta]ggart," he said suddenly, with the sound of some desperate [ri]nging in his voice, "I feel better whenever I talk to you. It's [be]cause I trust you. I don't trust anybody around me. But you—[yo]u're different. You're solid."

She was looking unflinchingly straight at him. "Thank you, Mr. [Th]ompson," she said.

It had been easy, she thought—until she walked out into the [st]reet and noticed that under her coat, her blouse was sticking [da]mply to her shoulder blades.

Were she able to feel—she thought as she walked through the [co]ncourse of the Terminal—she would know that the heavy indif[fe]rence she now felt for her railroad was hatred. She could not [ge]t rid of the feeling that she was running nothing but freight [tra]ins: the passengers, to her, were not living or human. It seemed [po]intless to waste such enormous effort on preventing catastrophes [and] protecting the safety of trains carrying nothing but inanimate [ob]jects. She looked at the faces in the Terminal: if he were to die [. . .] system that *these* [. . .] work to pro[. . .] [. . .]ir help would [. . .] to live, they [. . .]

[. . .] delivered to her [of]fice that afternoon; it was delivered with a bouquet of flowers [fr]om Mr. Thompson. She looked at the check and let it flutter [do]wn to her desk: it meant nothing and made her feel nothing, not [ev]en a suggestion of guilt. It was a scrap of paper of no greater [sig]nificance than the ones in the office wastebasket. Whether it [wo]uld buy a diamond necklace or the city dump or the last of her [fo]od, made no difference. It would never be spent. It was not a [. . .]od, made no difference. It would never be spent. It was not a [. . .] But [to]ken of value and nothing it purchased could be a value. But [. . .]s—she thought—this inanimate indifference was the permanent [sta]te of the people around her, of men who had no purpose and no [pa]ssion. *This* was the state of a non-valuing soul: those who chose [. . .]

[. . .] apartment house [. . .] haustion—and she [. . .] switched on the [. . .]pe that had [. . .] in her foyer [. . .] She picked it up—and then, with [. . .]pped under her door [. . .] laughing soundlessly, half kneeling, half [. . .]

in the casual manner of a man enjoying the motion of his own ly Mr Thompson noted the lightness of the steps the straight ie, the flat stomach the relaxed shoulders Galt walked as if were both ...

... said Mr Thompson hastily it's not an order we 't want to give you orders Take it easy Jim Galt ... orld is collapsing said Taggart "People are perishing—and it's t matter who's right or wrong? think we're wrong, you should rifice your mind to save them!"

"By what means will I then save them?

"Who do you think you are? cried Taggart

Galt stopped "You know it"

"You're an egoist!"

"I am."

"Do you realize what sort of egoist you are?"

"Do you?" asked Galt looking straight at him

t was the slow withdrawal of Taggart's body into the depth of armchair, while his eyes were holding Galt's that made Mr ompson unaccountably afraid of the next moment

"Say" Mr Thompson interrupted in a brightly casual voice hat sort of cigarette are you smoking?

Galt turned to him and smiled I don't know"

"Where did you get it?"

"One of your guards brought me a package of them He said ne man asked him to give it to me as a present Don't rry" he added your boys have put it through every kind of t. There were no hidden messages It was just a present from an onymous admirer"

The cigarette between Galt's fingers bore the sign of the dollar ames Taggart was no good at the job of persuasion Mr ompson concluded But Chick Morrison, whom he brought the t day, did no better

"I ... I'll just throw myself on your mercy Mr Galt," said ick Morrison with a frantic smile "You're right I'll concede t you're right—and all I can appeal to is your pity Deep down my heart ... you're a total egoist who feels no

look in the mirror, then ask himself whether I would ever that my moral stature is at the mercy of his actions"
:t out of here!" cried Mr Thompson, yanking Ferris to his 'Get out! Don't let me hear another squeak out of you!" He the door open and pushed Ferris at the startled face of a outside
ind let them drop with a
ce was expressionless
"isn't there anybody who

here's nothing to talk about."
'e've got to We've got to convince you Is there anyone you'd to talk to?"
lo"
thought maybe . . . it's because she talks—used to talk—like at times . . . maybe if I sent Miss Dagny Taggart to tell
—"
She's my only failure
l on my side But she
e'd sell her soul for her
lap her face"
No, no, no! You don't have to see her, if thats how you feel m't want to waste more time on people who rub you the wrong ' . . Only . . . only if it's not Miss Taggart I don't know m to pick . . . If . . . if I could find somebody you'd be willto consider or . . ."
I've changed my mind," said Galt. "There is somebody I'd like to ak to"
'Who?" cried Mr Thompson eagerly
'Dr Robert Stadler"
Mr Thompson emitted a long whistle and shook his head aphensively "That one is no friend of yours, he said in a tone of nest warning
"He's the one I want to see"
"Okay, if you wish If you say so Anything you wish. I'll have n here tomorrow morning"
That evening, dining with Wesley Mouch in his own suite, Mr iompson glared angrily at a glass of tomato juice placed before n "What? No grapefruit juice?' he snapped, his doctor had prenbed grapefruit juice as protection against an epidemic of colds.
"No grapefruit juice," said the waiter, with an odd kind of emphat.
"Fact is," said Mouch bleakly, "that a gang of raiders attacked a ain at the Taggart Bridge on the Mississippi They blew up the ack and damaged the bridge Nothing serious It's being repaired -but all traffic is held up and the trains from Arizona can't get rough"
"That's ridiculous! Aren't there any other—?" Mr Thompson opped, he knew that there were no other railroad bridges across e Mississippi After a moment, he spoke up in a staccato voice Order army detachments to g the bridge. Day and night. T

It was ...

...uble to hide what method of conditioning they would welcome a chance to employ.

...

It was not the snow on his temples—thought Dr. Stadler ... burning pressure, it had been there since that scene, last night, when he had screamed to Mr. Thompson that he could not see ...

...temples and the faint, dizzying nausea of unreality came from the fact that he could not recapture the sense of being Dr. Robert Stadler.

He noticed the metallic gleam of the bayonets held by the guards at the door, and the sound of a key being turned in a lock. He found himself walking forward and heard the door being locked behind him.

Across the long room, he saw John Galt sitting on the window sill, a tall, slender figure in slacks and shirt, one leg slanting down to the floor ... his knee, his head ...

...against a spread of summer blue, and he heard the passionate intensity of his own voice saying twenty-two years ago "The only sacred value in the world, John, is the human mind, the inviolate human mind . . ."—and he cried to that boy's figure, across the room and across the years

"I couldn't help it, John! I couldn't help it!"

He gripped the edge of a table between them, for support and as a protective barrier, even though the figure on the window sill had not moved.

"I didn't bring you to this!" he cried. "I didn't mean to! I couldn't help it! It's not what I intended! . . John! I'm not to blame for it! I'm not! I never had a chance against them! They own the world! They left me no place in it! . . . What's reason to them? ... You don't know how deadly they are! You ...

any longer! Do you hear me? I am not afraid! Who are you
blame me, you miserable failure? Here's where *your* road has
ught you! Here you are, caught, helpless, under guard, to be
ed by those brutes at any moment—and you dare to accuse me
being impractical! Oh yes, you're going to be killed! You won't
! You can't be allowed to win! *You* are the man who has to be
troyed!"

Dr Stadler's gasp was a muffled scream, as if the immobility
he figure on the ... and
s
N ... ide,
esc

Galt's voice had the same unbending austerity as his eyes "You
e said everything I wanted to say to you"

Dr Stadler banged his fists against the door, when it was
ned, he ran out of the room

For three days, no one entered Galt's suite except the guards who
ught his meals Early on the evening of the fourth day, the door
ned to admit Chick Morrison with two companions Chick

... ly, pointing to the door of the bedroom where a closet ...
en filled with expensive garments which Galt had not chosen to
ar "You will please put on your dinner clothes He added,
his *is* an order, Mr Galt."

Galt walked silently into the bedroom The three men followed
ick Morrison sat on the edge of a chair starting and discarding
e cigarette after another The valet went through too *many* too
urteous motions, helping Galt to dress, handing him his shirt
ids, holding his coat The muscular man stood in a corner, his
nd in his pocket No one said a word

"You will please co-operate, Mr Galt," said Chick Morrison,
hen Galt was ready, and indicated the door with a courtly gesture
invitation to proceed

So swiftly that no one could catch the motion of his hand, the
uscular man was holding Galt's arm and pressing an invisible gun
ainst his ribs "Don't make any false moves," he said in an ex-
essionless voice.

"I never do," said Galt

Chick Morrison opened the door The valet stayed behind. The
ree figures in dinner clothes walked silently down the hall to
evator

They remained silent ... elevator, the clicks of the
umbers above the ... their downward progress.

The elevator stopped on the mezzanine floor Two armed soldiers preceded them and two others followed as they walked through the long d m corridors The corridors were deserted except for armed sentinels posted at the turns The muscular man s right arm was linked to Galt s left the gun remained invisible to any possible observer Galt felt the small pressure of the muzzle against his side the pressure was expertly maintained not to be felt as an impediment and not to be forgotten for a moment.

The corridor led to a wide closed doorway The soldiers seemed to melt away into the shadows when Chick Morrison s hand touched the doorknob It was his hand that opened the door, but the sudden contrast of light and sound made it seem as if the door were flung open by an explosion the light came from three hundred bulbs in the blazing chandeliers of the grand ballroom of the Wayne Falkland Hotel the sound was the applause of five hundred people.

Chick Morrison led the way to the speakers table raised on a platform above the tables filling the room The people seemed to know without announcement that of the two figures following him it was the tall slender man with the gold-copper hair that they were applaud ng His face had the same quality as the voice they had heard on the radio calm confident—and out of reach.

The seat reserved for Galt was the place of honor in the center of the long table with Mr Thompson waiting for him at his right and the muscular man slipping skillfully into the seat at his left, not relinquishing his arm or the pressure of the muzzle The jewels on the naked shoulders of women carried the glitter of the chandeliers to the shadows of the tables crowded against the distant walls the severe black and white of the men s figures rescued the room s look of solemnly regal luxury from the discordant slashes made by news cameras microphones and a dormant array of television equipment The crowd was on its feet applauding Mr Thompson was sm ling and watch ng Galt s face with the eager anxious look of an adult waiting for a ch ld s reaction to a spectacularly generous g ft. Galt sat facing the ovation, neither ignoring it nor responding.

"The applause you are hearing " a radio announcer was yelling into a microphone in a corner of the room "is in greeting to John Galt who has just taken his place at the speakers table! Yes, my friends John Galt in person—as those of you who can find a television set will have a chance to see for yourself in a short while"

I must remember where I am—thought Dagny clenching her fists under the tablecloth in the obscurity of a side table It was hard to maintain a sense of double reality in the presence of Galt, thirty feet away from her She felt that no danger or pain could exist in the world so long as she could see his face—and simultaneously an icy terror when she looked at those who held him in their power when she remembered the blind irrationality of the event they were staging She fought to keep her facial muscles rigid not to betray herself by a smile of happiness or by a scream of pan c

She wondered how his eyes had been able t ... r in the crowd She had seen the brief pause of his ... no one ... e could notice the glance had been more ...

)

force
clothes
made
ed the
d have
nbered
er own words, with a stab of longing—should be only for those who have something to celebrate

Lawson.

Her brother ... closer to the plat-
ures of
tortured
ding in
ordeal;
ondered
who was prisoner here and who was master Her glance moved slowly down the line-up of his table Mr Thompson, Wesley Mouch, Chick Morrison, some generals, some members of the Legislature and, preposterously, Mr. Mowen, chosen as a bribe to Galt, as a symbol of big business She glanced about the room, looking for the face of Dr Stadler, he was not present.

The voices filling the room were like a fever chart, she thought; they kept ... into patches of silence,
ompleted,
ighboring
nous and

to pretend it meant.

She could not swallow the food that was placed before her; her throat seemed closed by a rigid convulsion She noticed that the others at her table were also merely pretending to eat Dr Ferris was the only one whose appetite seemed unaffected
... cream in a crystal bowl before her,
... the screeching
ow
iat
re

waved to



Once they have seen him—thought Dagny—can they wish to look anybody else? Once they know that *he* is possible, that this is hat man can be, what else can they want to seek? Can they now el any desire except to achieve in their souls what *he* has hieved in his? Or are they going to be stopped by the fact that e Mouches ...

... inside this room, the men who were seeing him across the country; ie could not tell whether he was listening no reaction altered e composure of his face

"I am proud to pay tribute tonight," said the leader of the Legisture, the next speaker, "to the greatest economic organizer the ... istrator, the most ... ive us! I am here ...

This—thought Dagny, with a sickened amusement—was the ectacle of the sincerity of the dishonest The most fraudulent rt of the fraud was that they meant it They were offering Galt e best that their view of existence could offer, they were trying to ... hest fulfill- ... this enor- ... ut content, ... without a

ue of values.

"We have discarded all our petty differences," Wesley Mouch was ow saying into the microphone, "all partisan opinions, all personal terests and selfish views—in order to serve under the selfless adership of John Galt!"

Why are they listening?—thought Dagny Don't they see the allmark of death in those faces, and the hallmark of life in his? Which state do they wish to choose? Which state do they seek for ankind? . . . She looked at the faces in the ballroom They were ervously blank, they showed nothing but the sagging weight of thargy and the staleness of a chronic fear They were looking at alt and at Mouch, as if unable to perceive any difference between iem or to feel concern if a difference existed, their empty, un- ... to know?" She shud- ... am ... ve? ... dis- ... ore. ... ully ... ore

agic admiration—and with hands ... what he was, who lived in iem These were the men who saw what he was, who lived in ustrated longing for his world—but tomorrow, if they saw ... hands would hang as limply eing murdered before

of their own He laughed in their faces, with bitterly incredulous contempt.

"You don't know what you're doing, you miserable juvenile delinquents! Do you think that you—*you!*—can handle a high-precision instrument of science? Who is your leader? I demand to see your leader!"

It was his tone of overbearing authority his contempt and their own panic—the blind panic of men of unbridled violence who have no standards of safety or danger—that made them waver and wonder whether he was, perhaps some secret top level member of their leadership, they were equally ready to defy or obey any authority After being shunted from one jittery commander to another, he found himself at last being led down iron stairways and down long, echoing, underground corridors of reinforced concrete to an audience with "The Boss in person

The Boss had taken refuge in the underground control room. Among the complex spirals of the delicate scientific machinery that produced the sound ray, against the wall panel of glittering levers, dials and gauges, known as the Xylophone Robert Stadler faced the new ruler of Project X. It was Cuffy Meigs

He wore a tight, semi military tunic and leather leggings, the flesh of his neck bulged over the edge of his collar his black curls were matted with sweat He was pacing restlessly unsteadily in front of the Xylophone, shouting orders to men who kept rushing in and out of the room

"Send couriers to every county seat within our reach! Tell em that the Friends of the People have won! Tell em they're not to take orders from Washington any longer! The new capital of *the* People's Commonwealth is Harmony City, henceforth to be known as Meigsville! Tell 'em that I'll expect five hundred *thousand* dollars per every five thousand heads of population, by tomorrow morning—or else!"

It took some time before Cuffy Meigs *attention* and bleary brown eyes could be drawn to focus on the person of Dr Stadler "Well, what is it? What is it? he snapped.

"I am Dr Robert Stadler"

"Huh?—Oh, yeah! Yeah! You're the *big guy* from outer spaces, aren't you? You're the fellow *who catches* atoms or something. Well, what on earth are you doing here?"

"It is I who should ask you *that question*"

"Huh? Look, Professor, I'm in no mood for jokes."

"I have come here to *take control*"

"Control? Of what?"

"Of this equipment. Of *this* place. Of the countryside within its radius of operation"

Meigs stared at him blankly for a moment, then *asked softly*, "How did you get here?"

"By car"

"I mean, whom *did* you bring with you?"

"Nobody"

"What weapons did you

"None My name is sufficient.
"You came here alone with your name and your car?"
"I did
Cuffy Meigs burst out laughing in his face
"Do you think asked Dr Stadler that *you* can operate a installation of this kind?
"Run along Professor run along! Beat it before I have yo shot! We ve got no use for intellectuals around here!"
How much do you know about *this?* Dr Stadler pointed the Xylophone
"Who cares? Technicians are a dime a dozen these days! Be it! This ain t Washington! I m through with those impra dreamers in Washington! They won't get anywhere bargaining wi

in a while Dr Stadler realized that Meigs was drunk
"Don t touch those levers you fool
Meigs jerked his hand back involuntarily, then waved it de fiantly at the panel I ll touch anything I please! Don t you te me what to do"
"Get away from that panel! Get out of here! This is mine! D you understand? It s *my property!*"
"Property? Huh!" Meigs gave a brief bark that was a chuckle.
"I invented it! I created it! I made it possible!"
"You did? Well many thanks Doc Many thanks but we don need you any longer We ve got our own mechanics"
Have you any idea what I had to know in order to make possible? You couldn t think of a single tube of it! Not a sing bolt!"
Meigs shrugged "Maybe not"
"Then how dare you think that you can own it? How dare yo come here? What claim do you have to it?
Meigs patted his holster *This*
Listen, you drunken lout!" cried Dr Stadler "Do you kno what you re playing with?
"Don't you talk to me like that you old fool! Who are you t talk to me like that? I can break your neck with my bare hand Don t you know who I am?"
"You re a scared thug way out of his depth!"
"Oh I am am I? I m the Boss! I m the Boss and I'm not goi to be stopped by an old scarecrow like you! *Get out of here*"
They stood staring at each other for a moment, by the panel c the Xylophone both cornered by terror The unadmitted root c Dr Stadler s terror was his frantic struggle not to acknowledg that he was looking at his final product that *this* was his spiritu son. Cuffy Meigs terror had wider roots it embraced all of ex istence he had lived in chronic terror all his life but now he wa struggling not to acknowledge what it was that he had dreaded a moment of his triumph, when he expected to be safe, th

mysterious, occult breed—the intellectual—was refusing to fear him and defying his power.

"Get out of here!" snarled Cuffy Meigs "I'll call my men! I'll have you shot!"

"Get out of here, you lousy, brainless, swaggering moron!" snarled Dr Stadler "Do you think I'll let you cash in on *my* life? Do you think it's for *you* that I . that I sold—" He did not finish "Stop touching those levers, God damn you!"

"Don't you give me orders! I don't need you to tell me what to do! You're not going to scare me with your classy mumbo jumbo! I'll do as I please! What did I fight for, if I can't do as I please?" He chuckled and reached for a lever

"Hey, Cuffy, take it easy!" yelled some figure in the back of the room, darting forward.

"Stand back!" roared Cuffy Meigs "Stand back, all of you! Scared, am I? I'll show you who's boss!"

Dr Stadler leaped to stop him—but Meigs shoved him aside with one arm, gave a gulp of laughter at the sight of Stadler falling to the floor, and, with the other arm, yanked a lever of the Xylophone

The crash of sound—the screeching crash of ripped metal and of pressures coll[illegible] monster [illegible] sound [illegible] to the [illegible]es, shot [illegible] as a [illegible] miles, [illegible]bsticks, [illegible] as if [illegible]ashed and minced by a single second's blow, with no time for a sound to be heard by the twisted bodies of the victims—and on the circle's periphery, halfway across the Mississippi, *the engine* and the first six cars of a passenger train flew as a shower of metal into the water of the river along with the western spans of the Taggart Bridge, cut in half

On the site of what had once been Project X, nothing remained alive among the ruins—except for some endless minutes longer, a huddle of torn flesh and screaming *pain* that had once been a great mind.

[illegible] freedom—thought Dagny—in [illegible]

[illegible]

unts of it, but it looked like a perfunctory terror. Their expressions anged from blank apathy to the relieved look of cheats who had elieved that the game could end no other way and were making o effort to contest it or regret it—to the petulant blindness of awson, who refused to be conscious of anything—to the peculiar ntensity of Jim, whose face suggested a secret smile.

"Well? Well?" Dr. Ferris was asking impatiently, with the racking energy of a man who feels at home in a world of hysteria What are you *now* going to do with him? Argue? Debate? Make peeches?"

No one answered.

"He . . . has . . . to . . . save . . . us," said Mouch slowly, s if straining the last of his mind into blankness and delivering an ltimatum to reality. "He has to . . . take over and save the ystem."

o

t

o know what he meant.

"You objected to that private research project of mine as 'impractical,'" said Ferris softly. "But what did I tell you?"

Mouch did not answer, he was cracking his knuckles.

"This is no time for squeamishness," James Taggart spoke up with unexpected vigor, but his voice, too, was oddly low "We on't have to be sissies about it"

"It seems to me . . ." said Mouch dully, "that . that the end ustifies the means . . ."

"It's too late for any scruples or any principles," said Ferris Only direct action can work now"

No one answered, they were acting as if they wished that their auses, not their words, would state what they were discussing

"It won't work," said Tinky Holloway "He won't *give in.*"

"That's what *you* think!" said Ferris, and chuckled "You haven't een our experimental model in action. *Last month,* we got three onfessions in three unsolved murder cases"

"If . . ." started Mr Thompson, *and his* voice cracked suddenly into a moan, 'if he dies, we all perish!"

"Don't worry," said Ferris "He won't. The Ferris Persuader is afely calculated against that possibility."

Mr Thompson did not answer

"It seems to me . . that we have no other choice . . ." *said* Mouch, it was almost a whisper

They remained silent. Mr Thompson was struggling *not to see* . . . at *him.* Then he cried suddenly, "Oh, do . . . you want!"

whis-

st

whispering tensely in front of the crackling blue void of an empty
levision screen.

Standing in the tight space of the telephone booth, as in the cabin
f a ship about to take off for a different planet, she dialed the
umber OR 6-5693.

The voice that answered at once was Francisco's. "Hello?"

"Francisco?"

"Hello, Dagny. I was expecting you to call."

"Did you hear the broadcast?"

"I did."

"They are now planning to force him to give in." She kept her
oice to the tone of a factual report. "They intend to torture him.
hey have some machine called the Ferris Persuader, in an isolated
nit on the grounds of the State Science Institute. It's in New
ampshire. They mentioned fixing. They mentioned that they
ould have him on the radio within three hours."

"I see. Are you calling from a public phone booth?"

"Yes."

"You're still in evening clothes, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Now listen carefully. Go home, change your clothes, pack a
w things you'll need, take your jewelry and any valuables that
u can carry, take some warm clothing. We won't have time to
o it later. Meet me in forty minutes, on the northwest corner, two
ocks east of the main entrance of the Taggart Terminal."

"Right."

"So long, Slug."

"So long, Frisco."

She was in the bedroom of her apartment, in less than five min-
tes, tearing off her evening gown. She left it lying in the middle of
e floor, like the discarded uniform of an army she was not
rving any longer. She put on a dark blue suit and—remembering
alt's words—a white, high-collared sweater. She packed a suitcase
nd a bag with a strap that she could carry swung over her shoul-
er. She put her jewelry in a corner of the bag, including the
racelet of Rearden Metal she had earned in the outside world,
nd the five-dollar gold piece she had earned in the valley.

It was easy to leave the apartment and to lock the door, even
ough she knew she would probably never open it again. It seemed
arder, for a moment, when she came to her office. No one had
en her come in, the anteroom of her office was empty; the great
aggart Building seemed unusually quiet. She stood looking for
moment at this room and at all the years it had contained. Then
e smiled—no, it was not too hard, she thought; she opened her
fe and took the documents she had come here to get. There was
othing else that she wanted to take from her office—except the
cture of Nathaniel Taggart and the map of Taggart Trans-
ntinental. She broke the two frames, folded the picture and the
ap, and slipped them into her suitcase.

She was locking the suitcase, when she heard the sound of
ng steps. The door flew open and — engineer rushed

were too many police cars speeding by, and too many sirens bursting in the distance. The news of the destruction of the Bridge was apparently spreading through the city, they would know that the city was doomed and they would start a stampede to escape—but they had no place to go, and it was not her concern any longer

She saw Francisco's figure approaching from some distance away; she recognized the swiftness of his walk, before she could distinguish the face under the cap pulled low over his eyes She caught the moment when he saw her, as he came closer He waved his arm with a smile

Then he took her suitcase with one hand, her arm with the other, and said, "Come on."

* *

The unit known as "Project F"—in honor of its originator, Dr. Ferris—was a small structure of reinforced concrete, low on the slope of the hill that supported the State Science Institute on a higher, more public level Only the small gray patch of the unit's roof could be seen from the Institute's windows, hidden in a jungle of ancient trees; it looked no bigger than the cover of a manhole.

The unit consisted of two stories in the shape of a small cube placed asymmetrically on top of a larger one The first story had no windows, only a door studded with iron spikes, the second story

to its door; nobody had ever suggested ... impression that the structure housed a project devoted to experiments with the germs of deadly diseases.

The two floors were occupied by laboratories that contained a great many cages with guinea pigs, dogs and rats But the heart and meaning of the structure was a room in its cellar, deep under the ground, the room had been incompetently lined with the porous sheets of sound proofing material, the sheets had begun to crack ... showed through

carefully chosen ... capacity for obedience.

The sixteen were stationed for the night outside the structure a in the deserted laboratories above the ground, where they mained uncritically on duty, with no curiosity about anything t might be taking place below

In the cellar room under the ground, Dr Ferris, Wesley Mo and James Taggart sat in armchairs lined up against one wall. machine that looked like a small cabinet of irregular shape s in a corner across from them Its face bore rows of glass dia each dial marked by a segment of red, a square screen that look like an amplifier rows of numbers, rows of wooden knobs plastic buttons a single lever controlling a switch at one side a a single red glass button at the other The face of the machi seemed to have more expression than the face of the mechanic charge of it he was a husky young man in a sweat stained sh with sleeves rolled above the elbows, his pale blue eyes were glaz by an enormously conscientious concentration on his task he mov his lips once in a while as if reciting a memorized lesson

A short wire led from the machine to an electric storage batte behind it Long coils of wire, like the twisted arms of an octop stretched forward across the stone floor, from the machine to leather mattress spread under a cone of violent light John Galt h strapped to the mattress He was naked, the small metal disks electrodes at the ends of the wires were attached to his wrists h shoulders, his hips and his ankles, a device resembling a stethoscop was attached to his chest and connected to the amplifier

Get this straight said Dr Ferris, addressing him for the fi time We want you to take full power over the economy of th country We want you to become a dictator We want you to ru Understand? We want you to give orders and to figure out th right orders to give What we want, we mean to get Speeches logi arguments or passive obedience wont save you now We ideas—or else We wont let you out of here until you tell us th exact measures you'll take to save our system Then we'll have y tell it to the country over the radio" He raised his wrist display a stop-watch "I ll give you thirty seconds to decide whether y want to start talking right now If not then we ll start. Do y understand?"

Galt was looking straight at them his face expressionless, a he understood too much He did not answer

They heard the sound of the stop watch in the silence counti off the seconds and the sound of Mouch s choked irregular brea ing as he gripped the arms of his chair

Ferris waved a signal to the mechanic at the machine mechanic threw the switch it lighted the red glass button and off two sounds one was the low humming drone of an elec generator the other was a peculiar beat, as regular as the of a clock but with an oddly muffled resonance It took them moment to realize that it came from the amplifier and that were hearing the beat of Galt s heart.

"Number three" said Ferris raising a finger in signal

The mechanic pressed a button under one of the dials A long shudder ran through Galt's body, his left arm shook in jerking spasms, convulsed by the electric current that circled between his wrist and shoulder. His head fell back, his eyes closed, his lips drawn tight. He made no sound.

When the mechanic lifted his finger off the button, Galt's arm stopped shaking. He did not move

The *three* men glanced about them with an instant's look of groping. Ferris' eyes were blank, Mouch's terrified Taggart's disappointed. The sound of the thumping beat went on through the silence.

"Number two," said Ferris.

nvulsions, with the cur-
kle His hands gripped
once from side to side,
v faintly faster

Mouch was drawing away, pressing against the back of his arm-
leaning forward.

d twisted in long
s the current was

running from his one wrist to the other, across his lungs The mechanic was slowly turning a knob, increasing the voltage of the current; the needle on the dial was moving toward the red segment that marked danger Galt's breath was coming in broken, panting sounds out of convulsed lungs.

"Had enough?" snarled Ferris, when the current went off

Galt did not answer His lips moved faintly, opening for air The beat from the stethoscope was racing But his breath was falling to an even rhythm, by a controlled effort at relaxation.

"You're too easy on him!" yelled Taggart, staring at the naked body on the mattress

Galt opened his eyes and glanced at them for a moment. They could tell nothing, except that his glance was steady and fully conscious. Then he dropped his head again and lay still, as if he had forgotten them.

of place in this cellar They
knowledge The
the flat hips, to
ed like a statue
stylized to a
, suggesting
iver, but of
e of ancient
spirit of this

Greece—the statue of man as

century's halls, so his body clashed with a cellar devoted to prehistorical activities The clash was the greater, because he seemed to belong with electric wires, with stainless steel with precision instruments, with the levers of a control board Perhaps—this was fought most fiercely st deeply buried at the
his watchers' sensations.

"Go ahead!" cried Taggart "What are you waiting for? Can t you make the current stronger? He hasn't even screamed yet!"

"What s the matter with you?" gasped Mouch catching a glimpse of Taggart s face while a current was twisting Galt s body Taggart

ant what *we* want?"

They heard no answer Galt raised his head once in a while and looked at them There were dark rings under his eyes, but the eyes were clear and conscious

In mounting panic, the watchers lost their sense of context and language—and their three voices blended into a progression of indiscriminate shrieks "We want you to take over! We want you to rule! . We order you to give orders! We demand that you dictate! We order you to save us! We order you to think! ."

They heard no answer but the beating of the heart on which their own lives depended.

The current was shooting through Galt s chest and the beating

Galt opened his eyes and raised his head

Then they realized that the drone of the motor had ceased too and that the red light had gone out on the control panel the current ... as dead

utton, to no avail ain He kicked the on the sound did

not return

"Well?" snapped Ferris "Well? What s the matter?"

"The generator s on the blink " said the mechanic *helplessly*

"What s the matter with it?"

"I don't know"

"Well find out and fix it!"

The man was not a trained electrician he had been chosen not for his knowledge but for his uncritical capacity for pushing any buttons the effort he needed to learn his task was such that his consciousness could be relied upon to have no room for anything ... the rear panel of *the* machine and stared in ... could find nothing visibly

"I don t know ..."

Who am I to know?"

The three men were *on their* feet crowding behind the mach

The three men were acting merely by re

to stare at its recalcitrant organs They were acting merely by re

they knew that they did *not*

"I dont care! I want to break him! I want to hear him scream! I want—"

And then it was Taggart who screamed It was a long sudden piercing scream as if at some sudden sight though his eyes were staring at space and seemed blankly sightless The sight he was confronting was within him The protective walls of emotion of

[illegible] do words built up by [illegible] in the span of one [illegible] wanted Galt to die

[illegible] directed all the ac[illegible] ove for [illegible] which [illegible] y what [illegible] he urge

[illegible] reality by the destruction of every living value for the sake of proving to himself that *he* could exist in defiance of reality and would never have to be bound by any solid immutable facts A moment ago he had been able to feel that he hated Galt above all men that the hatred was proof of Galts evil which he need define no further that he wanted Galt to be destroyed for the sake of his own survival Now he knew that he had wanted Galts destruction at the price of his own destruction to follow, he knew that he had never wanted to survive he knew that [illegible] anted to torture and destroy—he [illegible] own admission greatness by the [illegible] anyone chose to admit it or not [illegible] master of reality in a manner no [illegible] had equaled In the moment when he James Taggart had found himself facing the ultimatum to accept reality or die it was death his emotions had chosen death rather than surrender to that realm of which Galt was so radiant a son In the *person of* Galt—he knew—he had sought the destruction of all existence

It was not by means of words that this *knowledge confronted* his consciousness as all his knowledge had consisted of *emotions* [illegible] and a vision that he had no

[illegible]

with her joyous eagerness to [illegible] *defeat*—he was seeing [illegible] eagerness he had always wanted to defeat—he was seeing the face of a killer whom all *men* should rightfully loathe who destroyed values for being values, *who* killed in order not to discover his own irredeemable evil

"No " he moaned *staring* at that vision shaking his head to escape it "No No

"Yes" said Galt

He saw Galts eyes *looking* straight at his as if Galt were the things he was seeing

"I told you that on the radio [illegible]" said Galt.

"Oh, no ma'am! But . . . but if Dr Ferris said to let nobody in, at means nobody—" He added uncertainly and pleadingly, —doesn't it?"

"Do you know that I am Dagny Taggart and that you ve seen y pictures in the papers with Mr Thompson and all the top aders of the country?"

"Yes, ma am"

"Then decide whether you wish to disobey their orders"

"Oh, no, ma am! I don t!"

"Then let me in."

"But I can't disobey Dr Ferris, either!"

"Then choose"

"But I can't choose ma'am! Who am I to choose?"

"You'll have to"

"Look," he said hastily, pulling a key from his pocket and rning to the door, "I'll ask the chief He—'

"No" she said

Some qual ty n the t ne of her vo e made h m whirl back to

or I shoot
have that

His mouth fell open and the key dropped from his hand.

"Get out of my way" she said.

He shook his head frantically pressing his back against the oor "Oh Christ, ma am! he gulped in the whine of a desperate

t am
s not

"It s your life," she said.

order from Mr

"You don't. Maybe I haven t. Maybe I m acting on my own— nd you ll be punished for obeying me Maybe I have—and you'll

ecide them yourself"

"But I *can t* decide! Why me?"

"Because it s *your* body that s barring *my way*"

"But I can t decide! I m not *supposed* to decide!"

"I'll count to three" she said "Then I'll shoot."

"Wait! Wait! I haven't said yes or no!" he cried cringing tighter against the door, as if immobility of mind and body were his best protection

"One—" she counted she could see his eyes staring at her error—"Two—" she could see that the gun held less terror

s shattered fingers, and his muffled howl of pain He collapsed, roaning. In the instant when the second guard grasped it, he saw at Francisco's gun was aimed at him.

"Don't shoot, mister!" he cried

"Come down here with your hands up,' ordered Francisco, hold g his gun aimed with one hand and waving a signal to the crack f the door with the other

By the time the guard descended the stairs Rearden was there o disarm him, and Danneskjold to tie his hands and feet. The ght of Dagny seemed to frighten him more than the rest, he could ot understand it the three men wore caps and windbreakers, and, ut for their manner, could be taken for a gang of highwaymen, he presence of a lady was inexplicable

"Now," said Francisco, "where is your chief?"

The guard jerked his head in the direction of the stairs "Up here"

"How many guards are there in the building?"

"Nine"

"Where are they?"

"One's on the cellar stairs The others are all up there."

"Where?"

"In the big laboratory The one with the window"

"All of them?"

"Yes"

"What are these rooms?' He pointed at the doors leading off the all

"They're [illegible] the night."

[illegible] from Pete's pocket and [illegible] while Francisco continued,

"Are there any other men in the building?

"No"

"Isn't there a prisoner here?"

"Oh yeah, I guess so There must be or they wouldn't've kept us all on duty"

"Is he still here?"

[illegible]

[illegible] right on the stair

"Yes"

"How many doors are there?"

"Three It's the one in the middle."

"What are the other rooms?'

"There's the small laboratory on one side and Dr Ferris' office on the other"

"Are there connecting doors between them?"

"Yes"

Francisco was turning to [illegible] ons, when the guard

pleadingly, "Mister can I ask you a question?"

"Go ahead

"Who are you?

He answered in the solemn tone of a drawing room introduc "Francisco Domingo Carlos Andres Sebastian d Anconia."

He left the guard gaping at him and turned to a brief whisp consultation with his companions

In a moment it was Rearden who went up the stairs—swi soundlessly and alone

Cages containing rats and guinea pigs were stacked against walls of the laboratory they had been

were

them

the er was Rearden s face that sa him from being shot on sight when he entered his face was well known to them and too unexpected He saw eight heads sta at him with recognition and with inability to believe what they w recognizing

He stood at the door his hands in the pockets of his trous with the casual confident manner of a business executive.

"Who is in charge here?" he asked in the politely abrupt vo of a man who does not waste time

You you re not " stammered a lanky, surly individ at the card table

I m Hank Rearden Are you the chief?'

"Yeah! But where in blazes do *you* come from?"

"From New York"

What are you doing here?"

Then I take it you have not been notified"

"Should I have I mean about *what?*" The swift, touch resentful suspicion that his superiors had slighted his authority w obvious in the chief's voice He was a tall emaciated man, wi jerky movements a sallow face and the restless unfocused eyes a drug addict

About my business here"

"You you can t have any business here" he snapped, to between the fear of a bluff and the fear of having been left out some important top level decision. "Aren t you a traitor and deserter and a—"

I see that you re behind the times, my good man"

The seven others in the room were staring at Rearden with awed superstitious uncertainty The two who held guns still he them aimed at him in the impassive manner of automatons He d not seem to take notice of them

"What is it you say is your business here?" snapped the chief.

"I am here to take charge of the prisoner whom you are to de liver to me"

"If you came from headquarters you d know that I'm not su posed to know anything about any prisoner—and that nobody is to touch him!"

"Except me."

The chief leaped to his feet, darted to a telephone and seized the ceiver He had not raised it halfway to his ear when he dropped it oruptly with a gesture that sent a vibration of panic through the oom he had had time to hear that the telephone was dead and to now that the wires were cut.

His look of accusation as he whirled to Rearden broke against he faintly contemptuous reproof of Rearden's voice "That's no vay to guard a building—if *this* is what you allowed to happen. letter let me have the prisoner, before anything happens to him—if ou don't want me to report you for negligence, as well as insubordination."

The chief dropped heavily back on his chair, slumped forward across the table and looked up at Rearden with a glance that made his emaciated face resemble the animals that were beginning to stir in the cages

"*Who* is the prisoner?" he asked

[illegible]

"But haven't you heard?"

"What?"

"John Galt has made a deal with the government and has brought us all back."

"Oh thank God!" cried one of the guards the youngest.

"Shut your mouth! You're not to have any political opinions!" snapped the chief and jerked back to Rearden. "Why hasn't it been announced on the radio?"

"Do *you* presume to hold opinions on when and how the government should choose to announce its policies?"

In the long moment of silence they could hear the rustle of the [illegible]

[illegible]

...ppraisingly from Rearden's face to the two gu... ...ance slowly, ...he corners

The gunmen steadied their aim by an a... ...le move

ment. A nervous rustle went through the ... ...queaked

shrilly in one of the cages

: We do. You don't know who your prisoner is We do You 't know why your bosses want you to guard him We know why want to get him out. You don't know the purpose of your fight. know the purpose of ours. If you die, you won't know what 're dying for If we do, we will."

Don't . . . don't listen to him!" snarled the chief "Shoot! I order : to shoot!"

)ne of the guards looked at the chief, dropped his gun and, rais- his arms, backed away from the group toward Rearden

ft hand

t into a

atapult,

: tall, slender figure of a man flew into the room, landed on its

By the time the four survivors of the garrison began to reassemble ie pieces of their consciousness, their figures were stretched on the oor, bound and gagged, the fifth one was left standing, his hands ed behind his back.

"Where is the prisoner?" Francisco asked him.

"In the cellar . I guess."

"Who has the key?"

"Dr Ferris"

"Where are the stairs to the cellar?"

"Behind a door in Dr Ferris' office."

"Lead the way"

As they started, Francisco turned to Rearden. "Are you all right, Hank?"

"Sure."

"Need to rest?"

"Hell, no!"

From the threshold of a door in Ferris' office, they looked down a steep flight of stone stairs and saw a guard on the landing below.

"Come here with your hands up!" ordered Francisco

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Then the four rescuers were free to fly down the stairs to the locked steel door at the bottom. They had acted and moved with the precision of a controlled discipline. Now, it was as if their inner reins had broken

Danneskjöld had the tools to smash the lock, first to enter the cellar, and his arm barred Dagny's way ... of a second—for the length of a look to make certa ... was bearable—then he let her rush past him beyond

olish the torture machine into splinters

With the sound of the door slamming shut behind them and the rward thrust of the wheels under their feet, Francisco smiled for e first time.

they saw the dark shapes of the trees sweeping down and dropping past their windows, Galt leaned silently over and pressed his ips to Dagny's hand he was leaving the outer world with the one value he had wanted to win from it.

Francisco had produced a first-aid kit and was removing Rearden's shirt to bandage his wound Galt saw the thin red trickle running from Rearden's shoulder down his chest.

"Thank you, Hank," he said

Rearden smiled. "I will repeat what you said when I thanked you, on our first meeting 'If you understand that I acted for my own sake, you know that no gratitude is required'"

"I will repeat," said Galt, "the answer you gave me '*That* is why I thank you.'"

Dagny noticed that they looked at each other as if their glance were the handshake of a bond too firm to require any statement. Rearden saw her watching them—and the faintest contraction of his eyes was like a smile of sanction, as if his glance were repeating to her the message he had sent her from the valley

They heard the sudden

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